## **Taking Action**

Managing constipation isn't one-size-fits-all. To help find the strategies that are right for you. Dr. Megan Rossi. developed a decision flowchart. It's easy as following the **Constipation** arrows and answering the questions as you go. There are three broad greas: diet. physical activity, and toilet habits. VISIT YOUR DOCTOR Yes No LIFESTYLE CHANGES DO YOU HAVE ANY ALARM FEATURES? **DIETARY FACTORS** PHYSICAL ACTIVITY **TOILET HABITS** Increase fluid and gradually build up No fiber over several ROUTINE FIRST - LINE weeks 1. Give yourself five **APPROACH** to ten minutes to Are you drinking at least sit and relax on POSITIONING AND **FIRST - LINE** No relief Symptom relief 50 ounces of fluid per the toilet: even if **TECHNIQUE** day and meeting your 30 **APPROACH** you don't poop, 1. Check in with g. fiber target, including Do you exercise at least make this part of your pooping whole-grain fiber. three times per week (for position. See vour daily at least 30 minutes) to a handout. routine. Don't level where you'd Train your **SECOND - LINE SECOND - LINE** become short of breath if pressure on strain pooping **APPROACH APPROACH** you tried to sing: vour bowels muscles. See Try the following Try one of the following at a either; they'll go handout. together. time. when they feel comfortable. You may find that **FXFRCISE** 1. FRUIT: Six prunes (about 50 LISTEN TO YOUR BODY listenina to music TIMING grams) or one kiwi per day for When you get the urge, or a mindfulness one week. If well tolerated, Gentle go! Withholding can cause **BOWEL** app can help double the amount and exercise postconstipation. continue for three weeks. MASSAGE relax you. meal may help 2. FIBER: Psyllium or flaxseed 2. Aim to sit on the See promote mass PROBIOTIC: See handout. toilet at the same Whether it's power handout. movement to time each day. The walking with a friend, get "things mass movement in going dancing, or moving" Symptom relief: No relief: the mornina joining a sports team, Continue as needed Stop intervention and regularly moving increases post-meal with the goal of try another strategy and after coffee, so your body can make decreasing detailed above. If still try to maximize your a big difference no relief, see "When intervention chances be Diet is Not Enough." gradually. dedicating time the.