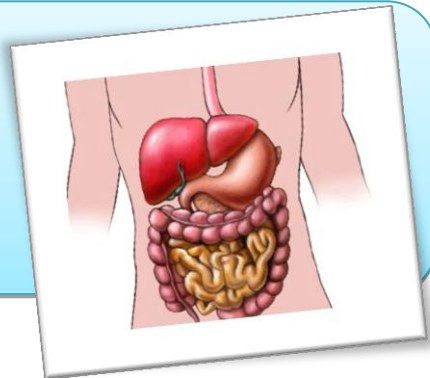


# Promoting Bowel Health

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The bowel is where most nutrients are absorbed. A healthy bowel makes it easier for the body to absorb the nutrients it needs to function. This helps reduce the risk of constipation, diarrhoea, colorectal cancer, haemorrhoids, incontinence and bowel disease such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). A healthy bowel will improve digestion, reduce wind and bloating, while helping to improve mood and sense of wellbeing.



## Hydration promotes a healthy bowel:

It is important for residents to consume adequate fluid to promote bowel health to help:

- Prevent constipation
- Reduce bowel irritability
- Prevent other health consequences of dehydration

Fluids can include:

- Water, milk, tea/coffee, soup, weak cordial



## Fibre and health:

In addition to protecting against heart disease, diabetes and weight gain, fibre can help promote bowel health by:

- Preventing constipation and associated haemorrhoids (note: ensure adequate water is consumed also)
- Promoting the 'good' gut bacteria to aid in digestion
- **Sources include:** fruits and vegetables, wholemeal and wholegrain breads, high fibre breakfast cereals, legumes and lentils, dried fruits, brown rice, oats, barley and natural fibre supplements such as psyllium

**\*\* TIP \*\***  
*The minimum fluid requirement for the elderly is 1500mL of fluid per day*

**Tips for a healthy bowel:**

- Promote consumption of adequate fibre
- Promote intake of adequate fluids
- Promote a healthy body weight
- Encourage regular exercise
- Promote avoidance of smoking and excessive alcohol
- Minimise reliance on laxatives where possible

**Check out our other ACNAS fact sheets:**

- Dietary Fibre
- Increasing Fluid Intake
- Managing constipation and diarrhoea

**For more information:**

- Visit [www.naqld.org](http://www.naqld.org) or
- Email: [acnas@naqld.org](mailto:acnas@naqld.org)

*\*Please note: The advice provided is general in nature. A high fibre diet may not be suitable for people with certain health problems. Please consult a GP and/or Dietitian for further advice.*