



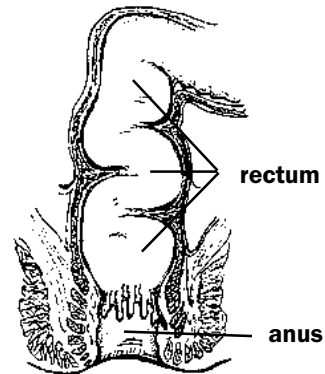
Name of Child: _____ Date: _____

Overflow Encopresis

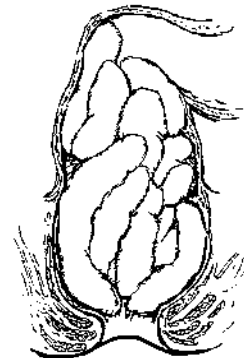
Is encopresis the same as constipation?

No. Constipation is when stool moves slowly through the large intestine. It does not come out often enough, and comes out hard and dry.

If the large intestine fills with stool over a long time, the rectum gets stretched out. When this happens, it is then hard for the child to know when to sit on the toilet to have a bowel movement. Overflow encopresis is when stool comes out, even when the child doesn't want it to. Loose stool leaks around the hard stool in the rectum, and soils the underwear.



normal rectum



stretched out rectum
filled with stool

Can my child learn to pay attention and stop soiling?

No. Your child cannot feel when it's time to go to the bathroom.

Do children outgrow this problem without medical help?

Most often, overflow encopresis needs to be treated by a doctor. This problem can get worse as the child gets older.

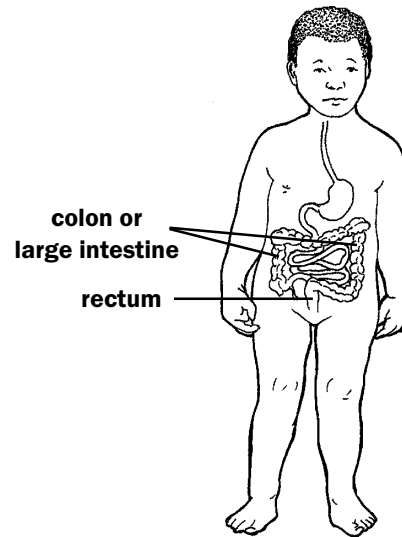
What are the goals of treatment?

Short term goals:

- To clean stool out of the large intestine.
- To help your child learn to go to the bathroom at the same time every day.

Long term goals:

- To prevent the large intestine from getting filled with stool again. Once the rectum rests, it will go back to its normal size. Then your child will be able to feel when it's time to go to the bathroom.
- To keep stool soft and easy to pass.



What is the treatment?

- Medicine can be used to clean out the colon. Other medicines may help keep the stool soft and easy to pass.
- We will look at your child's diet, to make sure it has enough fruits, vegetables, whole grains and water to keep the stool soft.
- You will learn how to help your child go to the bathroom at the same time every day. Sometimes a child refuses to sit. You may need to work with a child and adolescent psychologist or child and adolescent psychiatrist to form a plan that can work for your family. They are trained to understand and work with children on this type of plan.

Now that you've read this:

- Describe encopresis to your nurse or doctor. (Check when done.)
- Describe the treatment for encopresis to your nurse or doctor. (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,

- call your child's doctor or call _____

**If you want to know more about child health and illness,
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital:
1919 East Thomas Road in Phoenix
602-546-1400
www.phoenixchildrenshospital.com**

Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

**#9 • Written by Nancy Rayhorn, BSN, RN, CGRN • Illustrated by Dennis Swain
This handout is also available in Spanish as #228/9s.**