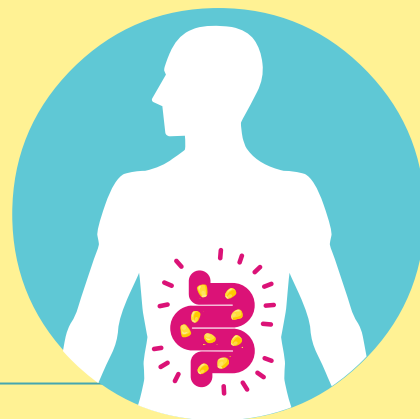


The Sweetcorn Test

Assessing Bowel Transit Time at home



?

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Bowel Transit Time (BTT) is the amount of time it takes for food to come out in your stool (poo) after it's been eaten. A slow BTT can indicate constipation. Because the outer layer of sweetcorn is made of cellulose, it is not digested or broken down in the gut, and can be viewed very easily in the stool.

1

2

INSTRUCTIONS

Cut sweetcorn out of your diet for one week, then eat one tablespoon of fresh, frozen, or tinned sweetcorn, on its own or mixed in with other foods. Do not eat anymore sweetcorn after you have had the "test portion".

Watch for the sweetcorn kernels to come out in your stool.



3

HELPFUL TIPS

If you cannot take sweetcorn, try one medium-sized serving of beetroot or a good portion of sesame seeds.

To make it easier to see the sweetcorn, place some toilet paper in the bowl before you sit on the toilet. This stops the stool from disappearing down the toilet arm.



RESULTS

5



4

Check your stool for sweetcorn for at least 3–4 days, noting when you first see the kernels and when they are no longer present. All of the sweetcorn should be passed within the times stated below, otherwise you may be constipated:

- Children: 24–36 hours
- Adults: 12–48 hours



FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you think you have a slow BTT, there are lots of ways to improve this such as adequate fluid intake, fibre, and exercise. There are more tips and tricks on our website to help with this, or you can give us a call on 0800 650 659. For further advice, speak with your GP or Practice Nurse.