

Bristol Stool Chart

Type	Appearance	Meaning
1	Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)	This indicates a lack of fiber, insufficient water intake and a slow transit time. Increase water, herbal teas, raw fruits and vegetable, cooked grains, flax oil and olive oil. Avoid meat, dairy, wheat, eggs, refined carbs and sugar. Reduce stress and increase exercise.
2	Sausage shaped but lumpy	This indicates that the stool has been in the colon for too long. More water and fiber is needed.
3	Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface	The cracks indicate that the stool surface may be dry, increase water intake.
4	Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft	This is a healthy bowel movement that is easy to pass – well done.
5	Soft blobs with clear cut edges (passed easily)	This may indicate the bowels are moving too fast. This can lead to nutrient deficiencies and dehydration. Increase fiber especially from cooked grains. Supplementation with Probiotics may well improve digestion and absorption. Psyllium can also improve bowel movements.
6	Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool	The mushiness of this stool, like the one before, indicates insufficient water has been reabsorbed from the stool, indicting rapid transit time and poor absorption of foods. May be caused by a poor diet, food intolerances and or bacteria imbalance. Eat whole grains. Avoid too much raw fruits and vegetables and their juices for a while. Supplement with Probiotics.
7	Watery, no solid pieces. Entirely liquid	This isn't good and may indicate an infection. See you doctor. Eat well cooked brown rice and drink the water in which it is cooked. Try homemade vegetable soups to replace electrolytes. Replace lost fluids with water and herbal teas and supplement with a probiotic.

Ideal stool – medium brown, the colour of plain cardboard. It should leave the body easily with no straining or discomfort. It should have the consistency of toothpaste and be about 4 to 8 inches long and 1 to 2 inches in diameter. There should also be little gas or odor.

Sink too quickly stool – may indicate not enough fiber rich foods in the diet, or not enough water. The stool is often dark because it has been sitting in the intestines for a prolonged time.

Soft, smelly stool – one that floats, sticks to the side of the bowl or is difficult to flush away may mean there is increased fat in the stool, called steatorrhea, it may also be pale in colour.

Mucus in stool – whitish mucus may indicate intestinal inflammation. It may be present in both constipation and diarrhea.

Loose stool/pencil thin stool/quick ending bowel movement – loose stools, abdominal bloating, lack of energy and poor appetite can be the result of tiredness and weak digestion brought on by stress and diet. Eat more warm, cooked foods and drink ginger and cinnamon teas. Avoid fried and greasy foods, dairy, raw fruits and vegetables and cold drinks.

Constipation – recurrent bouts of constipation can cause stools to remain in the rectum where it becomes dry and hard, leading to an impacted colon. Chronic constipation can be prevented by drinking lots of water, eating enough fiber, getting regular exercise and enough sleep each night. When these lifestyle changes don't work, a gentle laxative may be needed.

Other causes; antidiarrheal drugs, narcotics, anticholinergics, methadone.

Yellow/pale stool – may indicate serious health problems so consult your doctor. A stool sample will reveal whether caused by digestive problems or a bacterial, viral or parasitic infection. The stool may be shiny or greasy, and foul smelling due to undigested foods.

Conditions may include; GERD, celiac's, gallbladder disorders (inflammation of the gland or ducts), liver disorders (lack of bile caused by cirrhosis, hepatitis, inflammation or liver metastases) or steatorrhea (high levels of fat).

Other causes of a pale or yellow stool, besides lowered bile secretion is the use of aluminium hydroxide antacids.

Green stool – in babies may appear after being first introduced to foods. In children due to illness or from ingesting food colourings. In adults it may be the result of eating large amounts of leafy green vegetables or foods with green food colouring. Light green may indicate too much sugar in the diet. And green diarrhea may indicate bile salts passing through the digestive tract unchanged.

Bloody stool – an abnormal finding. If the blood is bright red it may indicate a problem in the lower digestive tract, closer to the rectum. If the blood is dark and dried it may indicate a problem with the GIT, higher up, possibly even the stomach. Conditions that cause bloody stools may include; Crohn's, hemorrhoids, polyps, tumours in the lower colon and rectum and ulceration in the stomach or intestines. *Red stools* may also be the result of eating intense red food colourings or red foods such as beets.

Black stool – dried blood from internal bleeding in the upper digestive tract, consult your doctor.

Very dark brown – may result from drinking wine the night before, eating too much salt or not enough vegetables.

Candida stool – may look frothy in or may have a cottage cheese appearance.

Baby stool changes – infant stools are a variety of colours, this depends greatly on their age and what they eat. Dark green or black stools are normal, but if there's green mucus on a regular basis or large amounts of it, consult your doctor.

Teething – when infants begin to teethe they swallow large amounts of saliva, and it shows as green mucus in their stool. It may also cause a runny acidic bowel and nappy rash may result.

Viruses – may cause malabsorption in the intestines, visible as green mucus in the stool, apply creams to prevent nappy rash and it should clear up in a few days. Ensure fluid intake to prevent dehydration.

Diarrhea – cause by many things like over excitement, over heating or too much milk. The excess fat in milk may cause yellow-green stool mucus and if the diarrhea is still present after a day or two, see your doctor. Again apply cream to prevent nappy rash.

Food intolerances – may show up as green mucus in the stools. Fructose, lactose and gluten intolerances are common so try an elimination diet.

Constipation – this may be the result of poor diet and not enough fluids, but also if chronic consult your doctor as an obstruction may be the cause.

Blood in stools – despite the possible same causes as there are with adults, ask them if they swallowed anything, a foreign body may be the cause of irritation and damage within the digestive system.

How often – this can range from three per week to **one a day (ideal)**, or others believe every 2 to 3 hours after a meal, so two to three times daily. If a person passes more than 4 watery bowel movements a day, this is diarrhea. If they pass less than 2 to 3 times per week and the stools are dry, hard and difficult to pass, this is constipation.