

Autism & continence

Lorraine MacAlister
Autism Training Consultant



Introduction



- Toileting difficulties may be common in autistic children
- Initial advice may have been misleading
- Variation in timing of autism diagnosis
- Other difficulties may have had priority
- Parental feelings and emotions



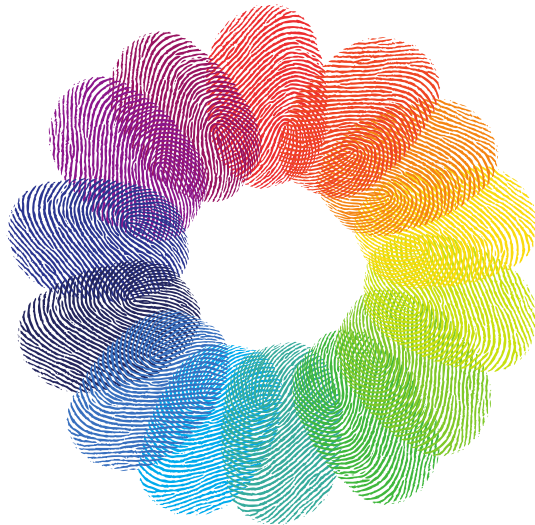
Common toileting difficulties



- Basic toilet training skills
- Anxiety and fears about using toilet
- Constipation, withholding and soiling
- Smearing
- Going to the toilet in inappropriate places
- Using different toilets
- Having a restricted diet
- Wetting in the day
- Wetting at night



Potential challenges



- interpreting the language used
- less likely to communicate the need to go
- less likely to copy others
- may wee or poo in 'inappropriate' places

- changing routines
- transferring skills
- fears and anxieties

- recognising bowel or bladder is full
- sitting on toilet
- sensations of poo wee and poo
- sensory input of bathroom

Things to think about...



- Language you're going to use
- Getting used to bathrooms & toilets
- Clothing & adaptations needed
- Timing for toilet training
- Put going to the toilet on routines
- Ensure regular intake of clear fluids (seven drinks a day.)



Considering sensory differences



- Be the detective
- Sensory profile
- Environmental audit
- Avoid or limit exposure
- Build in positive experiences
- Make toileting fun!



Toilet seats

Non-slip mats

Weighted items

Lighting and reflections

Noises

Things to fiddle with

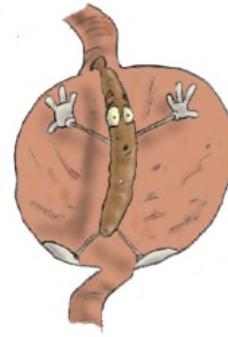
Reduce risk of splashes

Grab rails or enclose area

Smells

Temperature

Pooing quiz



Increasing the fibre content in the diet can treat constipation?



Too many eggs cause constipation?



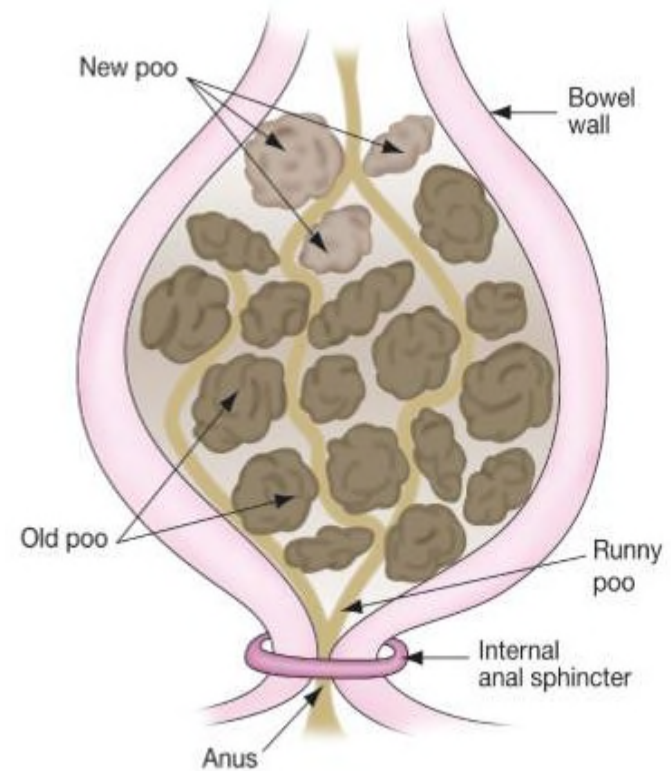
Some people may not know when their bowels need to empty?



Prolonged use of laxatives can lead to a lazy bowel?

Constipation

- The rectum becomes full of poo.
- A distended bowel does not send signals to the brain about needing to go to the toilet.
- Withholding of poo to avoid pain is common.
- Overflow soiling often misdiagnosed or confused with diarrhoea.
- Often goes undiagnosed.



Tackling childhood constipation and soiling with a macrogol laxative

Menu

- Home and video
- Useful information
- Maintenance regime
- Disimpaction regime
- Bristol stool chart
- Main Trust website



www.thepoonurses.uk



Sources of support



ERIC

www.eric.org.uk



Bladder and Bowel UK

www.bladderandboweluk.co.uk



Toilet Training and the Autism Spectrum

www.jkp.com

Any questions?





www.autism.org.uk



www.networkautism.org.uk

