



# Health Awareness

## Misconceptions Keep People From Getting The Help They Need

(NAPSA)—Contrary to popular opinion, exercising, eating lots of fiber and drinking lots of liquids may not be the solution for those suffering from constipation. A review study in the *American Journal of Gastroenterology* suggests fewer than half the patients with constipation get help from added fiber and that many people with severe constipation who take fiber supplements end up feeling worse.

Women's health expert Dr. Donnica Moore says that while drinking lots of water and getting exercise may be good for your health, these lifestyle changes may not cure your constipation.

"The study debunks lots of myths about constipation and particularly the use of laxatives. The study finds that stimulant laxatives, such as Dulcolax®, are effective over the long term and don't cause any damage to the colon. This should be good news for people who have tried diet and lifestyle changes without success," she notes.

Constipation is often an awkward and sometimes even embarrassing subject for many sufferers and is surrounded by many incorrect beliefs held by both health professionals and sufferers alike. A survey of the general public revealed that nearly 80 percent of people mistakenly believe that constipation is primarily due to a lack of fiber in the diet, not enough exercise and that increasing fluid and fiber intake will alle-

### Myths and Misconceptions

Can you tell which of these statements about constipation is a myth?

1. Drinking lots of liquids can help everyone avoid constipation.
2. Eating more fiber doesn't help everyone avoid constipation.
3. Exercise can help everyone avoid constipation.
4. Long term laxative use can damage the colon.

Answers: 1. False 2. True 3. False 4. False



viate the symptoms.

"The good news is that the 'Myths and Misconceptions About Chronic Constipation' paper has clarified many of these assumptions and shown that often they are not based on medical evidence," notes Brian Doyle, senior product manager for Dulcolax. "A key finding is that diet and lifestyle should not be assumed to be the cause of constipation in general."

While a diet rich in fiber may be helpful for some people, the study's authors conclude that in many people with more severe constipation, fiber intake can make symptoms even worse and increased fluid intake will not provide significant relief, except in people where there is evidence of dehydration.

One area of apparent confusion

concerns the use of laxatives which have mistakenly been associated with a number of unsubstantiated concerns over the years. The reviewers found that these concerns are mostly unfounded and state that laxative use does not cause damage to the colon and it is uncommon for most laxative users to develop a level of tolerance, contrary to widely held beliefs.

Professor Muller-Lisner, lead author of the paper, notes "Constipation is a widespread and sensitive disorder. Many sufferers often feel guilty and responsible for their symptoms, believing their lifestyle is to blame. This review provides sufferers and health care professionals with strong and legitimate foundations to remove these feelings of guilt."

One commonly and widely available stimulant laxative that is used by millions of consumers worldwide, Dulcolax, is effective in alleviating the symptoms of constipation by stimulating the natural movement of the bowels. It has a unique Comfort Coating which ensures it acts locally where it is needed in the large bowel. Dulcolax is clinically proven to be safe and effective treatment for constipation even if use over the long term is necessary.

For more information on the "Myths and Misconceptions About Chronic Constipation" study published in the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, visit [www.dulcolax.com](http://www.dulcolax.com).