

Patty's PT Tips

Incontinence Management

March 9, 2022 (Revised)

Basics of Pelvic Floor Muscle Strengthening

1. Find the correct muscles to contract. The “Kegel” muscles are the bottom of the bowl that is formed by the bones of the pelvis, the deep abdominals, the muscles that pull the thighs together, muscles that rotate the hips and the gluteals (buttocks).
2. When exercising the pelvic floor you want to focus on recruiting that sling of muscle that supports the bladder and maintains the closure of the urethra. The sensation should feel like there is a tightening and lifting of the floor.
3. Progression of strengthening can begin in the lying position, then in sitting and finally in standing or squatting. The lying position can allow for a stronger more efficient muscle contraction. It will be easier to focus on the correct muscle contraction and minimize the recruitment of the muscles that defeat the purpose you are trying to achieve.
4. You want to train the muscle to contract slowly, quickly, strongly and relax completely.
5. Recommended routine:
 - Target the specific muscles
 - Perform 3 to 12 repetitions at slow velocity. Approximately 70% of a maximum contraction (fewer repetitions are better to optimize strength and power). Sustain the contraction for 3 to 10 seconds. Ramp up the endurance.
 - Rest for 5 to 10 seconds between contractions
 - Perform 3 sets per day (optimally)
 - Exercise should be performed 3 to 5 days/week
 - It may take 3 to 5 months before you feel successful-don't give up!
6. Bladder irritants:
 - Carbonated Beverages: Soda and sparkling water
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Caffeine-coffee, tea chocolate and some medications
 - Citrus fruits and juices-orange, grapefruit, lemon, lime, mango, pineapple, Vitamin C supplement
 - Tomatoes and tomato-based foods-juice, sauces, barbeque sauce, chili

- Highly spicy foods
- Milk and milk products-cheese, yogurt, ice cream
- Sugar and other sweeteners-corn sweeteners, honey, fructose, sucrose, lactose

7. How to perform a Kegel:

First locate your pelvic floor muscles. Imagine that you're trying to stop from passing gas. Squeeze and lift the rectal area and, if you're a woman, the vaginal area, without tightening your buttocks or belly. You should sense a pulling or closing feeling in your genital area when you squeeze. Men may feel their penis pull in slightly. If you have trouble sensing the muscle, try squeezing a ball between the knees at first to enhance the contraction.

8. When you are practicing "Butts-Guts-and Blades" in you daily routines see if you can also gently engage the pelvic floor. It is supposed to be **gently** activated throughout the day.

PT with Patty's Supplemental Article:

How Much Prune Juice for Constipation Relief?

By : [Jon Yaneff](#)

It is terrible to feel as if you have to use the washroom, and yet nothing comes out. If you're having a problem with regular bowel movements, prune juice for constipation may be the solution.

In a healthy body, waste travels through the digestive tract within six to 24 hours. When it passes through the large intestine too slowly, this is called constipation.

Constipation among the elderly is especially prevalent. In fact, constipation affects 50% of community-dwelling older adults, and 74% of those living in a nursing home.

A healthy person has one to three bowel movements each day, but if your bowels are constipated, you likely haven't passed a stool in two to three days.

Also, when your bowels are constipated, it is not just difficult to pass stools; the urge to pass waste may disappear altogether. Sometimes constipation has no signs, but at other times you may pass painfully hard stools, experience a general feeling of malaise, or have a distended abdomen.

Although constipation is the top gastrointestinal disorder in the U.S., it is actually quite easy to avoid. Stress, inactivity, and certain medications all contribute to the problem.

That said, the best treatment for constipation is increasing your fiber and fluid intake. When fluids and fiber are lacking, the large intestine lacks regular stimulation to generate contracting motions, and waste cannot be propelled through the intestinal tract.

Luckily, [prune juice](#) kills two birds with stone. It is a liquid and high in fiber. Let me explain why many top doctors recommend prune juice for constipation, how much to drink for constipation, and much more...

Why Prune Juice for Constipation?

Prunes, aka dried plums, and prune juice are amazing sources of fiber that can keep you regular. Although they are best known for their laxative effect, they also have antioxidant, anti-cancer, anti-hypertensive, anti-hyperglycemic, anti-hyperlipidemic, anti-osteoporosis, and hepatoprotective effects. As a result, prune juice can help treat colon cancer, prevent heart disease, protect against liver disease, strengthen your bones, and reduce oxidative stress in the body.

Who would have thought that prune juice could do all that? There is even evidence to support a **prune juice laxative effect**.

Studies Say Prune Juice Is Laxative

1. Prune Supplements Can Soften Stools

A study published in the *Korean Journal of Community Nutrition* in 2008 found that prune supplementation is effective for energy, fiber, and water, which helps relieve constipation symptoms in adults.

The prune supplementation softened the stools and decreased the pain and length of time involved in a bowel movement.

2. Prunes Increase Frequency of Bowel Movements

Also, a review published in the journal *Alimentary Pharmacology & Therapeutics* in 2014 found that prunes were more effective than high-fiber psyllium husk for constipation treatment.

The authors of the study noted that prunes increased the frequency of bowel movements and improved stool consistency in those with constipation.

3. Prune Juice Is More Effective Than Medicinal Laxatives

In 1980, a geriatric center in New Jersey even found that they could almost completely eliminate pharmaceutical laxatives by using sources of dietary fiber, including prune juice. The center even saved \$44,000 in pharmaceutical expenses that year.

How does prune juice work and keep you so regular? Why is it considered good for your health?

Five Nutrients That Make Prunes the Best Remedy for Constipation:

1. Soluble Fiber

Soluble fiber improves the digestive system by stimulating peristalsis, which is a movement of the intestinal muscles that moves food through the digestive tract. Soluble fiber breaks down the blockages that cause constipation by absorbing water.

2. Non-Soluble Fiber (Insoluble Fiber)

The insoluble fiber in prunes fuels the probiotics, or good bacteria, in the digestive system. The good bacteria must exist in large amounts within the gut to maintain a healthy digestive tract.

3. Sorbitol

Why else are prunes for constipation so helpful? Prunes contain 15% sorbitol, which helps to soften and loosen stools by drawing lost water content back into the colon.

4. Dihydrophenylisatin

Dihydrophenylisatin is a chemical substance found in prunes' skin. It powerfully stimulates intestinal movement. This increases fluid secretion to help soften stools.

5. Active Digestive Enzymes

Many of the minerals and vitamins in prunes like potassium and vitamin A help activate the digestive enzymes.

This helps stools move quickly through the colon and rectum. The potassium also draws back lost water and strengthens the colon against harmful bacteria in the digestive tract.

Lakewood Prune Juice- Enriched With Fiber

Prune Juice Nutritional Content

Funny enough, plums and prunes are actually the same fruit; however, farmers refer to certain plums as prunes when they are cultivated specifically to be dried. So, that's why the more official term for prunes is dried plum.

Besides 2.6 g of fiber, one cup of prune juice contains:

- 44.7 g of carbs
- 1.6 g of protein
- 0.1 g of fat
- 0.6 mg of vitamin B6
- 707 mg of potassium
- 0.4 mg of manganese
- 3 mg of iron
- 10.5 mg of vitamin C
- 8.7 mcg of vitamin K
- 0.2 mg of vitamin B2
- 2 mg of vitamin B3
- 35.8 mg of magnesium
- 0.2 mg of copper
- 64 mg of phosphorus
- 0.5 mg of zinc.

How Much Prune Juice Should I Drink for Constipation?

How Much Prune Juice for Adults?

Adults should take four to eight ounces of prune juice each morning to ensure proper colonic stimulation. When you haven't expelled a stool in a few days, you should **drink up to three glasses daily**.

Also, drinking a glass of water before consumption increases its effectiveness. A glass of heated prune juice in the morning will encourage a bowel movement in the evening, while a glass of warm prune juice before bed will help you go in the morning.

How Much Prune Juice for Infants?

When [treating a baby or small child with constipation](#), **two to four ounces is recommended**, but two ounces per day should be enough. If the child doesn't like it, try prune juice popsicles!

How Long Does Prune Juice Take to Work?

Because prune juice is high in natural sugar, it's best that you purchase juice without added sugar. Better yet, you can easily make prune juice yourself using one cup of dried prunes and five cups of water.

Remove the stones from the prunes and boil five cups of water. Add some boiled water to a heat-safe container with the prunes. Fill the container until the prunes are submerged, set aside the rest of the boiled water for later use, and let the prunes soak for 12 to 24 hours.

Blend the prunes and the water you soaked them in until smooth. Using a sieve, push the mixture into a one-liter container, and get rid of the solid pieces. Use the remaining water to fill the container till you have a full liter, stir, and chill the juice in the fridge for up to a week.

How long does it take for prune juice to work? They work differently for certain people. For some it works in a few minutes, and for others it takes 30 minutes to an hour.

However, it is always best to wait at least a few hours after consuming prune juice for natural constipation relief before you start panicking that you haven't had a bowel movement yet.

If you still haven't had a bowel movement after several hours, try drinking warm distilled water as well.

Conclusion: How to Juice Prunes

You can choose prunes or prune juice to help treat constipation. However, the fiber in prunes may cause gas and bloating. As a result, it may be best to go with prune juice. It is also better to go with juice without added pulp, which also can lead to bloating.

Also, follow these tips for a better bowel movement:

- Exercise stimulates intestinal contractions, and even a brisk 30-minute walk is enough to get your bowels moving.
- Drink eight to 10 glasses of water per day. Water is a must since dehydration can lead to constipation.
- Never hold back. When you do, you are actually training your bowels not to expel waste, and the result is chronic constipation.
- Retrain your bowels by sitting on the toilet at the same time each day, even if you don't feel the urge to go. After exercise or early in the morning are good times.
- Use a stool or squatty potty. This helps put you in the correct position to move all the waste smoothly through your digestive tract.

Enjoy your prune juice, and happy pooping!

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