

Bowel Movements

There is a wide range of normal stooling patterns. Some infants stool with each feeding. Others may go two or three days before a bowel movement. Your baby's stools will probably change in color, softness, and frequency from time to time. Usually, breast-fed infants have liquid, seedy, yellow or mustard-colored stools. If you're breast-feeding your baby, don't take runny stools as a sign of diarrhea. The stools of formula-fed infants are yellowish-tan. All babies sometimes have green, brown or gray-colored stools. However, if the stool is green, runny and frequent, overflowing the diaper, it's usually a sign of diarrhea.

As long as your baby seems happy and content, is eating normally, and has no signs of illness, don't worry about minor changes in the stools. Almost all babies will strain and appear uncomfortable when they stool. Again, if the texture is soft, this is very normal and requires no attention. If the stool is hard, and especially if there is evidence of blood streaking, give two ounces of half-strength prune juice twice daily. If these measures are unsuccessful, give us a call. We want to discourage the frequent use of suppositories, and we do not recommend enemas for infants. Similarly, laxatives are rarely necessary.