

# Bowel Routine Instruction



The Geriatric Medicine service provides inpatient and outpatient specialist care to older persons aged 75 years and above. Specialist assessment and individualised holistic management are offered to elderly with bladder and bowel-control problems, memory, mood and behavioural problems and multiple falls or difficulty walking. Patients are cared for by a multi-disciplinary team comprising doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, dietitians, pharmacists, podiatrists and medical social workers, where necessary.

Re-educating the bowel includes setting a routine to encourage the regular emptying of one's bowels.

Our bowel has periods of increased muscular activity when the “urge to go” is more likely. This is due to a reflex called the “gastro colic reflex” and it is important to take full advantage of this when it happens to establish a fixed routine. Most of this occurs in the morning, after breakfast or at night after dinner. Your bowels will gradually learn to establish a regular pattern with the following steps to establish a bowel routine.

## How to establish a bowel routine

- Have a hot drink after you awake
- Have your breakfast (do not skip it)
- Move around for 20 to 30 minutes
- Take your time to sit on the toilet and practice the correct position to open your bowels the way you have been taught
- If you do not empty your bowels after 5 to 10 minutes, leave the toilet and try again after your next meal or when you get that “urge to go”



## General tips

- Avoid using laxatives unless advised by your doctor. Long term use can cause your bowels to be dependent on them. Your bowels can work again by itself with time and the correct training. Suppositories or small rectal enemas may be used as directed.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the medication you are taking could cause constipation.
- Eat at regular times to keep your bowels working. Sometimes, smaller meals are better tolerated. Choose foods that are less likely to cause wind and bloating.
- Maintain adequate fluid intake of 1.5 to 2 litres a day, unless otherwise advised. Cut down on caffeinated drinks.
- Physical activity stimulates bowel activity. Try to keep to a regular exercise routine.



Please contact us for further information or if you need assistance.

**Notes:**

**For more information**

**Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital**

1 Jurong East St 21, Singapore 609606

General enquiries: 6716 2000 Fax: 6716 5500

[www.juronghealth.com.sg](http://www.juronghealth.com.sg)

**Clinical and appointment line hours (closed on Sundays and public holidays)**

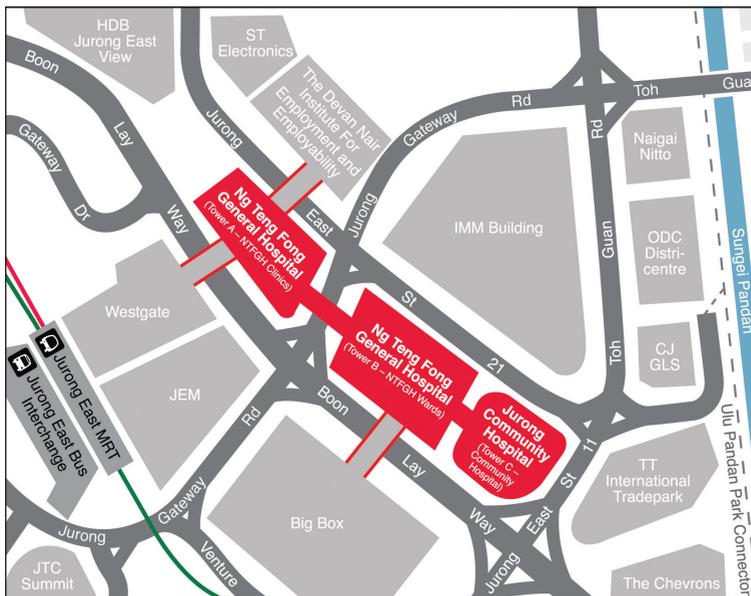
For appointments, please call 6716 2222

Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm, Saturday 8.00am - 12.30pm

For dental appointments, please call 6716 2233

Monday - Thursday 8.00am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.00am - 5.00pm

**Getting there**



**By train**

Jurong East MRT Station

**By bus**

**From Jurong East Bus Interchange**

SBS 51, 52, 66, 78, 79, 97, 97e, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M, 160, 183, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

**Along Boon Lay Way**

SBS 99, Private bus service 625

**Disclaimer:**

The information in this brochure is meant for educational purposes and should not be used as substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek your doctor's advice before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.