

Centre for Community Child Health and Department of General Medicine

Training Diary

Training Diary

This diary belongs to

This training diary is based on original work by Professor Terry Nolan, published in 1991 and further developed by paediatricians at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, in 2012.

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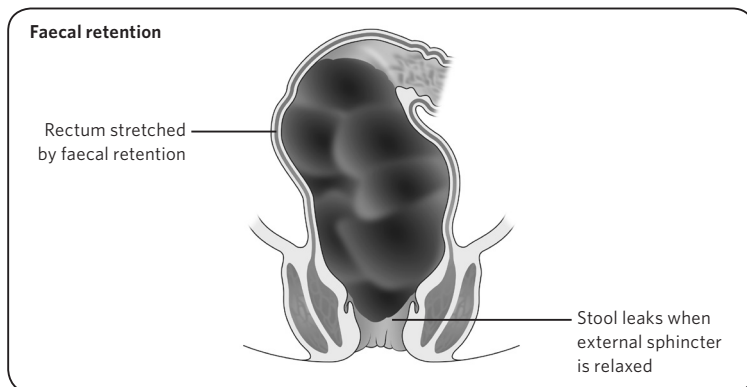
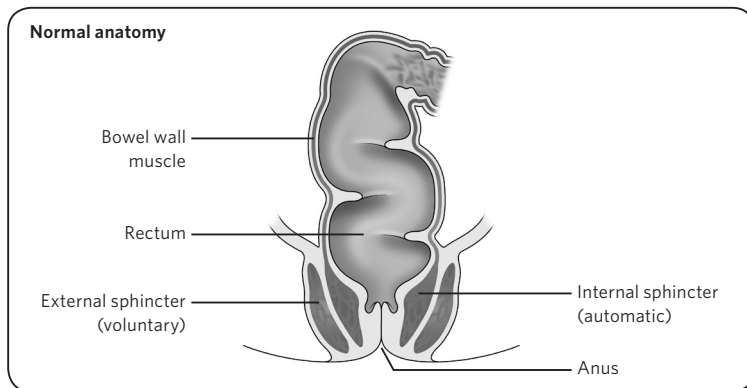
What is encopresis or faecal soiling?

Encopresis (*pronounced en•ko•pre•sis*) or faecal soiling is when a child who is past toilet training age poos regularly in places other than the toilet. It occurs when a child has lost the voluntary control of their bowel movements.

What causes faecal soiling?

There are several known causes of faecal soiling. The most common cause is chronic constipation. When your child has been constipated for some time, the poo builds up and starts to stretch the rectum or lower bowel (this is called faecal retention). This can mean your child loses the 'need to go' feeling because the rectum is always stretched.

Poo can then leak out because your child has no control. Your child usually can't tell when the leak is happening.



How common is it?

Constipation is very common—around a third of children will experience it—and about one child in every 40 will have faecal soiling.

I don't think my child is constipated

Even if your child does not experience the usual symptoms of constipation—hard poos, pain doing a poo, or blood in the poo from skin tears around the anus—it is still possible that there is a hard poo inside their bowel, causing faecal soiling.

There are other causes of soiling that are related to abnormal bowel function but these are very rare.

How can my child be helped?

The best chance comes from taking a positive team approach. The team is led by you and your child, and supported by your doctor. It can take several months to establish lasting results, but a program of regular sits on the toilet, as well as laxative medication, will cure more than two out of three children within six months, and make more than nine out of 10 children substantially better.

Is faecal soiling caused by emotional problems?

Soiling is embarrassing and can lead to emotional distress in some children. The emotional problems a child may experience will vary depending on your child's age and development and the severity of the problem. Emotional problems are not usually the cause of encopresis. Any problems nearly always improve after your child achieves bowel control.

What about diet?

A healthy diet with adequate fibre can really help—cereal, fruit, vegetables, water or juice, and high fibre bread and other grains.

Using your training diary

Don't forget	Remember to fill in the diary every day; this way it will be up to date and ready to show to the doctor at your next appointment.
Sits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim for three sits each day—usually it is best after breakfast, after school (or mid-afternoon on weekends) and after dinner. Use a small footstool if your child's feet can't rest flat on the floor while sitting on the toilet. Each month, write the sit-time suggested by the doctor next to where the diary says 'minute sits' at the top of the left hand page. The time may be increased or reduced later depending on progress. Set the sit-time on an oven clock or other timer so there are no arguments about when the time is up. Try to stay involved and help to make sitting fun—you can ask your doctor for tips that might work for you and your child. If your child has a poo within the first minute or so of the sit, continue the sit for the full time because another poo might still be coming. For every sit on the toilet put a tick ✓. If your child has a poo in the toilet at that time also, place a star ★ in the box.
Spontaneous poos	If your child has a poo into the toilet at a time other than at the regular sit times—eg your child responds to the 'need to go' feeling—place an additional star in the column titled 'Spontaneous poos'.
Add up the stars	At the end of each month, add up all the stars for that month and write the total in the box at the bottom of the right hand page.
Tick if no soiling today	Place a tick ✓ for each day when no soiling occurs. Leave the box blank if an accident occurs.
Medicine	In the medicine column, write in the medicine taken that day.
Comments	Make a note in the comment column of anything you want to remember to tell the doctor at the next visit. The doctor will be particularly interested in whether your child develops feeling about needing to do a poo. It's also good to occasionally record the size and consistency of your child's poo.
Be positive and flexible	It's important to keep your child's morale high with lots of positive encouragement and support while going through this program. Sometimes accidents will occur, but keeping records in this diary can help you to understand why, and to work as a family to try to reduce the number of accidents.

Sample of completed training diary

Write time for each sit here

Write the month here

This column is an example only

Minute sits	5				Month	May		
Day/Date	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Spontaneous poos	Tick if no soiling today	Medicine	Comments	
Mon 1	★	✓	✓		✓	1 scoop		
Tue 2	✓	✓	✓			½ sachet	Didn't make it	
Wed 3	✓	✓	✓		✓	3 drops		
Thu 4	★	✓	✓		✓	1 scoop		
Fri 5	★	✓	★	★	✓	½ sachet	Went on own	
Sat 6	★	✓	✓			3 drops		
Sun 7	★	✓	✓		✓	1 scoop		
Mon 8	✓	★	✓			½ sachet	Soft poo today	
Tue 9	★	✓	★	★	✓	3 drops		
Wed 10	✓	★	✓			1 scoop		
Thu 11	★	✓	✓		✓	½ sachet		
Fri 12	✓	✓	★		✓	3 drops	Didn't make it	
Sat 13	★	✓	✓		✓	1 scoop		
Sun 14	✓	★	★		✓	½ sachet	Soft poo today	
Mon 15	★	✓	✓			3 drops		
Tue 16	★	★	✓		✓	1 scoop		
Wed 17	✓	★	★	★	✓	½ sachet		
Thu 18	★	✓	★			3 drops	Very pleased today	
Fri 19	✓	✓	✓		✓	1 scoop		
Sat 20	★	✓	★		✓	½ sachet		
Sun 21	★	✓	✓	★	✓	3 drops		
Mon 22	✓	★	✓			1 scoop		
Tue 23	★	✓	✓		✓	½ sachet	Soft poo today	
Wed 24	✓	✓	★		✓	3 drops		
Thu 25	★	✓	✓			1 scoop		
Fri 26	✓	★	✓		✓	½ sachet	Very pleased today	
Sat 27	★	✓	★		✓	3 drops	Soft poo today	
Sun 28	★	★	✓	★	✓	1 scoop		
Total stars for this month								39

Tick for regular sits

Write date here

Extra stars for poos at other than regular times

Star for poo in toilet

Monthly total of stars

Minute sits				Month			
Day/Date	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Spon- taneous poos	Tick if no soiling today	Medicine	Comments
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Total stars for this month

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