

## **COLON AND RECTAL SURGERY, LTD.**

**Kenneth J. Boyd, M.D., F.A.C.S.**

**Samir N. Parikh, M.D., F.A.C.S.**

**Shirley S. Shih, M.D., F.A.C.S.**

Riddle Health Care Center II • Suite 2101 • Media, PA 19063  
610 • 565-3435

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR BETTER BOWEL HABITS WITH WHEAT BRAN**

More people have bowel problems and require laxatives today than ever before. This is because our foods now are so highly refined that we eat very little bulk, or fiber. If we replace this missing fiber in our diet, it will result in a softer and bulkier, larger bowel movement and a return to a normal bowel habit. There is evidence to suggest that a normal bowel habit may help to prevent some serious diseases of the colon.

1. Purchase one pound of miller's unrefined wheat bran from the health food store.
2. Add 2-4 heaping teaspoonfuls to your breakfast cereal (hot or cold). Mix before adding milk.
3. You may add wheat bran to other foods such as soup, salads, mashed potatoes, yogurt, etc.
4. Drink at least 4-6 extra glasses of fluid throughout the day. Water is excellent but other drinks are also helpful.
5. Try to eat some fresh fruit every day.
6. Eat whole wheat or rye bread in place of white bread.
7. High fiber foods are good for you. Some examples: shredded raw carrots in a salad, cooked beets, cabbage and lettuce. A feeling of fullness or bloating is common and will often diminish over time. You may also lose weight.

If you have irregular bowel habits and often have days without a bowel movement, consider the following to re-train your bowel to function more predictably:

1. When you get up in the morning, drink a glass of warm water or other liquid.
2. Exercise for several minutes; sit-ups, toe-touches or torso-twisting is easy and stimulates the bowel by simple motion of the abdomen.
3. Now sit on the toilet and push gently for two minutes. If nothing happens within two minutes, get up.
4. If you do this every day for three to six months, you may re-train your bowel to empty every time you drink warm water (or other liquid) on arising in the morning.
5. Whenever you have the urge to have a bowel movement, make every effort to do so. Repeated stifling of the natural urge will likely result in weakening of the propulsive action of the colon, worsening of constipation, and contribute to irregular bowel function.