

# Constipation



## Constipation

is usually described as a **delay or difficulty in defecation**, which is present for **2 or more weeks** and sufficient to cause significant distress. This disorder is a common health problem in infants and children, and can be defined as:

- **organic**, e.g. metabolic or endocrine disorders, anorectal anomalies, neuromuscular diseases, and Hirschsprung's disease (5% of children) or
- **functional**, with no underlying organic cause (95% of children)

## Prevalence of functional constipation according to Rome IV

Under 1 year of age:



1-3 years of age:



## Symptoms

Constipation can manifest itself in a number of symptoms, which may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Infrequent bowel movements
- Faecal incontinence
- Hard and/or large stools
- Abdominal pain
- Painful defecation



## Management options

- **Pharmacological treatment:**  
Considered effective, but have potential undesirable effects
- **Non-pharmacological options:**  
E.g. herbal extracts that are a natural option leading to safer therapies
- **Examples** include:

