

Constipation and Stool Consistency Improved by Fiber Blend

A recent study reports that a combination of [dietary fibers](#) from various foods significantly improved symptoms of functional constipation in a small randomized clinical trial compared with placebo.



Study

The researchers conducted a single-center, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial with 54 Caucasian adults who had chronic functional [constipation](#). They were randomly assigned to receive either the fiber supplement or a placebo twice daily for 28 days. In addition, they continued to follow their normal diet. They were instructed on proper defecation, proper fluid intake, and the need to record any other treatments. These steps were aimed at ensuring conformity to real-life use conditions.

They kept a bowel function diary which recorded the number of spontaneous complete bowel movements, time, and stool consistency using the Bristol Stool Form Scale (BSFS). Difficulty in defecation, constipation symptoms such as heaviness, bloating, flatulence, and [pain](#) were also explored, as well as the need for laxatives or other measures to induce bowel movements.

The treatment group showed a progressive increase in the number of spontaneous complete bowel movements from baseline to 1 week after the last dose, and between consecutive weekly measurements. In contrast, the control group showed a modest increase between baseline and the last week of [treatment](#), but not at the one-week follow-up.

A significant increase in the number of spontaneous complete [bowel movements](#) per week was visible between groups from the end of the second week, from one more at the end of week 2 to two more by the end of the follow-up period.

Similarly, [stool consistency](#) improved, as reflected by progressively higher BSFS scores during treatment, though it dropped slightly during the follow-up week. The difference was observed from baseline to the end of week 4 and week 5, beginning at 0.55 at the end of week 2 and ending at 1.5 at the end of the follow-up week. The greatest difference, 1.7, occurred at the end of week 4.

The effect of treatment varied across individual constipation symptoms. For instance, abdominal bloating decreased progressively over the treatment period in the treatment group but not in the control group, as did heaviness and [abdominal distension](#). Interestingly, distension was higher in the treatment group at baseline. Flatulence also improved significantly in the treatment group, whereas abdominal pain did not differ significantly between groups.

The supplement was well-tolerated, with no adverse events reported and no participants requiring rescue [laxative treatment](#) during the study.

Results

The results are supported by a meta-analysis of earlier randomized [controlled trials](#), showing, in particular, the benefits of pectins on bowel function, with high doses of fiber linked to the greatest improvements in stool frequency and consistency when used for over four weeks of treatment.

Oat fiber has also been associated with improvement in multiple constipation-related areas. Resistant dextrin has been shown to act as a [prebiotic](#), increasing the production of short-chain fatty acids by gut bacteria, while also modulating enzyme activity and stabilizing the gut microbiota.

Thus, this combination may have exerted [complementary effects](#) on the bowel, improving function and relieving constipation.

The study has several limitations. Its sample size was small, limiting its generalizability. The single-center design and the inclusion of only Caucasian participants further limit the breadth to which the findings can be applied. The duration is too short to measure long-term effects. Residual confounding caused by dietary or [behavioral changes](#) cannot be excluded.

In addition, many outcomes relied on [participant-reported symptom](#) questionnaires, which are inherently subjective and may be influenced by reporting bias. The one-week follow-up was also too short to determine whether the benefits would persist after treatment stopped.

Conclusion

This dose is lower than the doses of the individual [fiber](#) components typically used separately, while avoiding the discomfort associated with the same dose of resistant dextrin.

Future larger multicenter studies should validate these results, examine how long the improvement persists, and explore changes in the [gut microbiota](#).

Source:

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20260630/Fiber-blend-relieves-constipation-and-improves-stool-consistency.aspx>