Katie Says “Why do I have constipation?”

Katie chooses to eat unhealthily, she has little fibre in her diet, she is in a wheelchair and doesn’t exercise.

Katie is having her breakfast, she always has white toast.

Hey Katie do you want some fruit and yogurt?

Katie spends most of her time on her lap top.

Hey Katie do you want to come swimming?

Katie doesn’t like to do any exercise.

Uh! No thank you!

Katie is having a cheese sandwich, chocolate and crisps for lunch.

Hey Katie do you want to have some of my orange?

Katie doesn’t drink very much during the day.

Uh! No thank you!

Katie is having her dinner with a friend.

Katie you should have some meat or salad with your pasta!

Uh! No thank you!
Later that week there is a queue forming outside the toilet.

Who's in there? We have been waiting ages.

I hope they are ok.

Just then Katie comes out of the toilet.

Katie doesn't look or feel very well she looks like she is in pain.

Are you ok Katie?

No I have a tummy ache and feel unwell.

Katie talks to her key worker.

Are you ok?.

Something is wrong and I am embarrassed to tell you about it.

Katie talks for a while with her key worker and tells her she hasn't been for a poo for over a week.

Her key worker suggests she goes to see the doctor.

Don't worry we can make an appointment at the doctors for you. The doctor will know what to do.
Katie went to her doctors appointment. She explained that she hadn't done a poo for a long time. Her tummy hurt and she said, "And my tummy hurts doctor." The doctor listened to Katie's tummy with his stethoscope. He explained that he would give Katie some medicine called a laxative. To help you do a poo I'm going to give you a laxative.

The doctor asked Katie about her diet and explained the importance of eating fruit and fibre and drinking lots of water. You could have wholemeal toast for breakfast to add fibre to your diet. It would help you to eat more fruit and vegetables. After Katie had visited the doctor she decided to make some changes to her diet, drink more water and to take regular exercise to help prevent her constipation returning.

Katie has been taking her laxatives and made some changes to her diet. She feels so much better. Changing my diet, eating more fruit and fibre, drinking more and taking regular exercise has stopped my constipation. Be like me, constipation free!
More information about constipation

Number facts about people with constipation
• 14% of people in the general population have constipation
• 20-50% of people with a learning disability have constipation

Effects of constipation
• Increase in epileptic seizures
• Behaviour changes
• Tiredness
• Lack of appetite
• Bloating
• Damaged bowel
• Pain
• Being sick
• Wind
• Bad breath

What can we do to prevent constipation
• Eat a healthy diet with fibre
• Exercise regularly
• Review medication
• Talk about it
• Monitor bowel movements
• Support people to have time to poo

If left untreated constipation can be life threatening.

More information can be found at:
http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/constipation/Pages/Introduction.aspx
https://www.easyreadhealthwales.org.uk/search-results.aspx?search=constipation