

## Can Drinking Juice Help Ease Constipation?

Some juices are helpful in treating constipation. Pear, prune and apple juices all naturally contain the sugar alcohol, sorbitol that is poorly absorbed by the intestines. The sorbitol stays in the intestines for a longer time and pulls water back into the intestinal tract causing the contents to have more fluid and move easier through the bowel. These juices also contain fructose, a sugar found in many fruits, which can also be poorly absorbed. These two sugars together can increase the fluid in the bowel contents and make the bowel movement softer and more easily moved by your child.

Because sorbitol has in fact been used as a medication to alleviate constipation in extreme cases, using sorbitol containing juices and foods must be done with caution. Cramps or diarrhea can occur when too much sorbitol is taken. One 8 ounce glass of pear juice can contain as much as 7 grams of sorbitol. As little as 10 grams of sorbitol has been known to cause diarrhea in children. So, use discretion when giving juice to your child. Start out with a little and increase as needed.

