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REVIEW

Clinical practice guidelines for the management of constipation in adults. Part 2: Diagnosis and treatment^{☆,☆☆}

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Abstract Constipation is a very common disorder that adversely affects well-being and quality of life. Evidence-based clinical practice guidelines are an essential element for proper patient management and safe, effective treatment.

The aim of these guidelines is to provide health care professionals who care for patients with chronic constipation with a tool that allows them to make the best decisions about the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of constipation.

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The methodology used to draw up these guidelines is described in the Part 1. In this article we will discuss the recommendations for the diagnostic and therapeutic management of constipation.

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PALABRAS CLAVE

Estreñimiento;
Guía de práctica
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Guía de práctica clínica sobre el manejo del estreñimiento crónico en el paciente adulto. Parte 2: Diagnóstico y tratamiento

Resumen El estreñimiento es un trastorno muy frecuente que afecta negativamente el bienestar y la calidad de vida de las personas. Para el correcto manejo y tratamiento eficiente y seguro de los pacientes, las guías de práctica clínica basadas en la evidencia son un elemento esencial.

El objetivo de esta guía es proporcionar a los profesionales sanitarios encargados de la asistencia a pacientes con estreñimiento crónico una herramienta que les permita tomar las mejores decisiones sobre la prevención, el diagnóstico y el tratamiento del estreñimiento.

La metodología utilizada en la elaboración de esta guía de práctica clínica se describe en la Parte 1. En este artículo expondremos las recomendaciones en el manejo, tanto diagnóstico como terapéutico del estreñimiento.

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Summary of treatment recommendations for chronic constipation. Quick reference guide

Non-pharmacological measures

High-fibre diet

- Consuming foods high in soluble fibre is recommended (fruits, vegetables, greens, legumes, nuts, rye bread) (moderate evidence, strong recommendation in favour).
- It is advised that fibre-rich foods be introduced gradually so that the gastrointestinal tract can adapt.

Water intake

- Adequate fluid intake is recommended to complement the effects of fibre supplements (low evidence, weak recommendation in favour).

Physical exercise

- Performing regular physical exercise adapted to the patient's condition is recommended (low evidence, weak recommendation in favour).

Pharmacological measures

Bulk-forming laxatives

- Psyllium (*plantago ovata*) is suggested as a treatment option in people with chronic functional constipation (low evidence, weak recommendation in favour).
- The use of methylcellulose is recommended as an alternative to psyllium (low evidence, strong recommendation in favour).

Osmotic laxatives

- Polyethylene glycol is recommended as a treatment option in people with chronic constipation (moderate evidence, strong recommendation in favour).
- Lactulose is recommended as a treatment option in people with chronic constipation (low evidence, strong recommendation in favour).
- The use of polyethylene glycol is preferred over lactulose (moderate evidence, weak recommendation in favour).

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