



## CONSTIPATION

**Flax** (*Linum usitatissimum*) If you suffer from the constipation incorporating flax seeds into your diet can provide some much needed relief. Raw flax seeds contain a great amount of fiber. This is great news for your digestive tract if you constantly suffer from the bloating, cramping, and frustration that are related to chronic constipation. Taking just a quarter cup of ground flax seeds daily can keep you regular, without taking harsh chemical laxatives.

**Psyllium** (*Plantago ovata*). Psyllium seeds contain a fiber called mucilage, which absorbs fluid in your stomach. This makes the seeds swell. As the seeds swell and pass through you, they add bulk to your stool, and as stool becomes bulkier, it presses on the colon wall causing you to take a bowel movement. Psyllium is quite popular in Germany, and Commission E approves taking three to ten tablespoons a day for chronic constipation. If you have asthma, don't take this herb. There have been several reports of allergic reactions to psyllium, including a few serious asthma attacks from inhaled seed dust.

Both Flax seed and Psyllium need water to work. If you take these without water, it may obstruct your digestive tract.

**Fenugreek** (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*). Like psyllium, fenugreek seeds contain fluid-absorbing mucilage. If you use fenugreek seeds, make sure you drink plenty of water to keep things moving along. And don't use more than two teaspoons at a time, as any more may cause abdominal distress.