**CONSTITUTION**  
**Level I**  
*If subjective data sufficient, no exam is necessary.*

**Skill Level:** RN  
**Definition:** Decrease in frequency and/or passage of hard, dry feces.

<table>
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<th>MILD</th>
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<td><strong>Subjective:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assessment:</strong></td>
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| • May complain of increased hardness of stools, difficulty in passing stools, or decreased frequency of bowel movements.  
• "I’m constipated."  
• May complain of mild abdominal distension. | • Alteration in Bowel Elimination:  
Constipation |
| **Objective:** | **Plan:**  
Patient educations and self-care items for this protocol include:  
• Natural dietary fiber like Metamucil.  
At nursing discretion may use any of the below:  
• Instruct patient to increase fluid intake to at least 12 glasses of water per day.  
• Exercise can help. Suggest a walking program.  
• Increase intake of food high in fiber such as fruits, vegetables, and bran cereal.  
• Milk of Magnesia 15-30 cc BID x 2 days.  
• Return to clinic if constipation continues.  
• Refer to practitioner if more than three incidences in one month noted. | **Nursing Education:**  
New onset constipation problems, especially if persistent, in patients over age 50 may be indicative of lower colon obstruction by a mass or tumor.
Constipation - Level I

APPROVED:

________________________________________________________________________
Medical Services Manager                Date
________________________________________________________________________
Chief Medical Officer                   Date

Medical Director

Signature: ___________________________  Date: 2/24/2015

Effective Date: 3/2015
Revised: February 2015