
Colon Transit Time

Patient Name _____ Date _____
Baseline _____ Follow-up _____

One of the most common health problems in “modern” civilization is chronic constipation. Studies of other cultures have consistently shown the correlation between healthy colons, large stools, and normal colon transit time. African and Asian natives from rural communities who eat bulky, high-fiber diets with little or no meat and no refined foods have almost complete freedom from heart disease, atherosclerosis, cancer (especially of the colon and rectum), diverticulitis, inflammatory bowel disease, and diabetes.

In addition to the consistency and frequency of bowel movements, a measure of colon health is the **colon transit time**. You can check colon transit time simply by eating a moderate serving of corn or beets or taking activated charcoal capsules and observing their appearance in your stool. Below is a space for you to record the results of this test. Submit this worksheet to your practitioner for review.

Instructions

1. Consume a moderate serving ($\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup) of corn or beets or four charcoal capsules.
Date: _____ Exact Time: _____
2. Visually examine your stool and note when corn or beets or charcoal is first seen. (Beets appear as a redness in stool color, charcoal turns the stool black, and corn appears as whole corn.)
Date: _____ Exact Time: _____
3. Note the time when corn, beets, or charcoal is last seen in stool.
Date: _____ Exact Time: _____
4. On a typical day, how often do you move your bowels, and are they formed or loose? Please describe.

The time between when you ingested the corn, beets, or charcoal to the time it first appears in your stool and then stops appearing in your stool is your colon transit time. People living in rural African and Asian societies have a colon transit time of between 12 to 24 hours. In our culture, the average colon transit time is much longer. If a long transit time is found, it indicates suboptimal colon health. If a very rapid transit time is found, it may indicate poor absorption and assimilation of nutrients. Both conditions need treatment and correction.