

Table 2 List of the Major Types of Laxatives and Their Usage

Name	Action	Composition	Dose
Anthraquinone colonic stimulants	Directly stimulate peristalsis	Cascara Senna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liquid • "Black and white" shakes • Tablets, granules, liquids • Activated by colonic bacteria • Requires 6–12 hours for onset • Dose: 34.4 mg sennosides in 1–3 doses/ day
Diphenylmethane colonic stimulants	Directly stimulates peristalsis	Bisacodyl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onset: Enteric coated: 6–12 hours Rectal: 0.5–1 hour • Dose: 10–15 mg hs (5–20 mg qd : tid)
Osmotic laxatives	Draw fluid into intestinal lumen leading to reduced transit time of semi• liquid stools	<p>MgOH, MgSO₄, NaPO₄</p> <p>Polysaccharides: Lactulose and Sorbitol</p> <p>Polysaccharides: Polyethylene glycol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onset: .5–3 hours • Caution with CHF with Na compounds • Caution in chronic renal failure with Mg compounds • May cause flatulence • Sweet taste can be unpalatable • Onset: 24–48 hours • Dose: 15–30 mL bid or qid <p>Doses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic constipation: 17 g and 8 oz water daily Onset: 48–96 hours • Accelerated Rx 68 g + 500 mL water Onset: 14–24 hours • Pre - procedure preparation 236 g in 4 L saline solution. Onset: 1–4 hours
Lubricants	Lubricates stool for easier passage	Mineral oil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dose: 15–45 mL • Onset 6–8 hours • Useful for fecal impaction • Not recommended for chronic constipation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritation of peri - anal region • Impairs absorption of fat-soluble vitamins • Risk of aspiration lipoid pneumonia
Prokinetic agents	Site of action: small intestine Dopamine antagonist + cholinergic agonist	Metaclopramide Dromperidone	Add to laxative if constipation resistant to laxatives