

Original Papers(None)

Effect of Fluid Intake on Bowel Habits in the Elderly

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Abstract

The study focuses on the effect of additional fluid intake (AFI) on bowel movements in the elderly. Thirty persons (74.7±10.8 years) consented to participate in the fourteen day research program. Although 18 were healthy, twelve were partially or completely bedridden and somewhat disabled. During the first 3 or 4 days, subjects drank fluid as usual. For the next seven days, they took at least 400ml per day of additional water or tea. Subjects recorded the forms of their stools using a scale *Form of Feces* (Davies, et al., 1986). The *Constipation Assessment Scale* (CAS), which was translated and modified by Fukai, et al. (1995), was used to ascertain the severity of constipation. The average volume of AFI was 370ml, and total intake was 1,450ml. The CAS scores decreased in 30% of the subjects, and the number of bowel movements increased in 53%. Feces turned significantly softer in the bedridden with AFI as measured by the rank sum test ($p<0.05$). Fifty-seven percent of the subjects reported their bowel habits had improved somewhat. These results indicate that AFI can be somewhat effective in improving constipation.
