

Tips to help you when opening your bowel (cont.)

THINK ABOUT YOUR BREATHING

- Take a nice deep breath in through your nose – you should feel your stomach gently expanding (but do not force it out). Take 3 to 4 deep breaths into the tummy, feeling the tummy and the pelvic floor relax and let go.
- To encourage the downward movement of the poo and relaxation of the sphincter muscle within your back passage, try gently bulging your tummy outwards. It may help to make a 'mooooooooooooooooooooo' sound:-
 - The 'mmmmmmm' sound will help to widen the waist line. If you want to try it on its own, place your hands either side of your waist. Make the 'mmmmmm' sound and feel how your waist widens into your hands. This **bracing** will help to encourage the downward movement of the poo.
 - The 'oooooooooooo' sound will encourage the **bulging** of your stomach and help the relaxation of the sphincter muscles.
 - Hold the 'mooooooooooooooooooooo' for 2 to 3 seconds and then relax. Repeat if needed.
 - Some people find that making a 'ssshhhhh' or 'hisssssss' sound can help. Find the sound that works best for you.
- **Support/splinting**
 - Some women (and men) find that if they support their perineum from the front (with folded toilet roll) while opening their bowels that it can help them to empty better.
 - Others find that supporting the buttocks on either side from behind can be helpful.
 - Some women find that gentle pressure backwards and downwards from their thumb in the vagina can help them to more effectively empty their bowels (this is called vaginal digitation)

OTHER TIPS WHICH MAY HELP

- Before moving your bowels, try **twisting** and/or reaching over your right shoulder with your left arm, turning your trunk **to the right** (just as far as is comfortable). This may mechanically help to evacuate your stool (like wringing out a towel). Hold for several seconds and repeat several times.
- Try **tilting your pelvis backwards and forwards**, gently and repetitively.
- Try **blowing hard into your closed fist**.
- Try **leaning forwards with a book against your stomach** to increase the pressure in your abdomen.

ILU abdominal massage – 1 to 2 times daily to facilitate the processing of your food through your intestines can help with bowel routine (see ILU abdominal massage leaflet)