

# SELF

## The Importance of Regularity...and How to Achieve It

“Almost everyone experiences the feeling of having a hard time having a bowel movement,” **Alex Sherman, MD, board-certified gastroenterologist at Vanguard Gastroenterology** and a clinical professor at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, tells SELF.

While that piece of information won't exactly make you feel better when you're stuck on the toilet, it should reassure you that straining to poop isn't necessarily concerning. In fact, if it happens every once in a while, you're likely okay and things can often be resolved with something as simple as increasing the fiber intake in your diet.

But if you find yourself straining to poop frequently, that could potentially signal an underlying issue that needs your attention, Dr. Sherman says. Want to find out why it hurts to poop—and what to do about it? We turned to top docs for the answers to all your poop questions.



**Alex Sherman, MD**  
**Board-certified Gastroenterologist**  
**Vanguard Gastroenterology**