

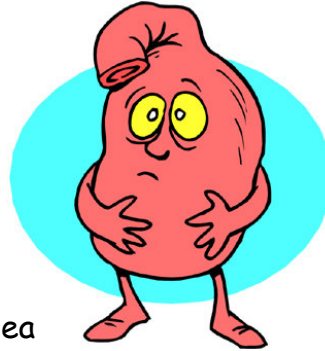
# Irritable Bowel Syndrome

What is Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)?

IBS is the most common gastrointestinal disorder, usually appearing in the late teen years or early adulthood. It is believed that people with IBS have intestines with increased sensitivity. IBS causes discomfort, but does not cause harm to the intestines nor does it lead to more serious diseases.

Symptoms may include:

- Abdominal pain
- Bloating
- Gas
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Alternating constipation and diarrhea
- Sensation of incomplete emptying of the rectum (false sensation).
- Presence of mucus in the stool.
- Irregular bowel function
- Heartburn is often associated with IBS but is not a symptom



\* Rectal bleeding is NOT a symptom of IBS. Rectal bleeding should be discussed with your doctor.

IBS symptoms may be triggered by medications, herbal supplements, foods, emotions or stress. Passing gas or having a bowel movement usually brings temporary relief. Symptoms can range from mild to severe.

Lactose intolerance can produce symptoms similar to IBS. It is possible to have both conditions or just lactose intolerance or IBS alone. Speak with a healthcare professional if you suspect you have lactose intolerance.

How is IBS treated?

The goal of IBS treatment is to improve your symptoms. Different treatment options include medication, exercise and learning to manage stress.

## What is the role of diet and nutrition in IBS management?

Making changes to your diet may help improve your symptoms. However, there is great variation in IBS triggers from one person to the next. Keeping a journal of all food and beverages you consume might be helpful to see if anything in your diet causes symptoms. Once you know your trigger foods, you can use the charts on the following pages to help manage specific symptoms.



### General IBS and Healthy Eating Tips

- Eat at least 3 meals at regular times each day.
- Try to avoid large meals, especially those high in fat.
- Drink 8-10 glasses of fluids each day.
- Reduce your caffeine intake by limiting coffee, tea, colas and chocolate.

- ❖ A two week elimination diet may help to identify offending foods. The ten foods to avoid include: dairy, wheat, high-fructose corn syrup, sorbitol, eggs, nuts, shellfish, soybeans, beef, pork, and lamb.
- ❖ It is strongly recommended you do this with the help of a Registered Dietitian as some foods (eg. wheat) are prevalent in most diets.

### Symptom: Constipation

Nutrition Factor	Plan
Consuming too little dietary fibre.	Gradually increase dietary fibre over several days. Aim for approximately 30 grams per day and assess the impact on your bowel function. Some individuals may need more fibre; others less. <i>See Fibre table for ideas.</i>
Inadequate fluid intake	Consume about 8 cups (250ml) of non-caffeinated beverages each day.

**Symptom: Alternating diarrhea and constipation or irregular bowel function**

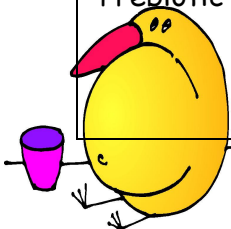
<b>Nutrition Factor</b>	<b>Plan</b>
Inconsistent fibre intake	Distribute fibre throughout the day. Follow a high fibre diet consistently, not just when symptoms are present.
Inconsistent fluid intake	Consume about 8 cups (250ml) of non-caffeinated beverages each day.

**Symptom: Diarrhea**

<b>Nutrition Factor</b>	<b>Plan</b>
Caffeine or Alcohol or Olestra (fat substitute used in the US)	Try limiting coffee, tea, colas, energy drinks, chocolate, alcohol and products with olestra. Any of these may act as a laxative.
Higher fat meals or foods	Try limiting things such as fast foods, baked goods, fatty cuts of meat or skin on chicken, convenience foods, deep fried foods, desserts and chocolate.
Spicy Foods	Large amounts of certain spices such as chili, chili pepper, garlic, hot sauce, ginger and spicy BBQ sauce may worsen diarrhea.
Sorbitol and other sugar alcohols (Mannitol and Xylitol)	Higher amounts are found in sugar free chewing gum, sugar free candies and sugar free chocolate. Moderate amounts are found apples, apricots, bananas, melons and raisins.
Fibre	Foods such as oatmeal, cheerios, peanut butter, white rice, rice pudding, banana, applesauce, and psyllium husk <i>may help</i> . **In some instances, a "low residue" diet may help. For more information, please talk with your dietitian.
Cromolyn Sodium (oral form)	This may act as an anti-inflammatory agent and can be obtained through prescription from your doctor.

## Symptom: Abdominal pain, bloating and gas

Nutrition Factor	Plan
Swallowing air	Eat and drink slowly, avoid carbonated beverages (soft drinks, beer), avoid drinking through a straw, chewing gum and sucking on candy.
Constipation (can trap gas, causing cramping)	See tips found in the constipation section.
Higher fat meals or foods	See tips in diarrhea section for making low fat choices.
Increasing fibre content in the diet too rapidly	Increase fibre slowly. Add more fibre every 2-3 days.
Sorbitol and other sugar alcohols (Mannitol and Xylitol)	Higher amounts are found in sugar free chewing gum, sugar free candies and sugar free chocolate. Moderate amounts are found apples, apricots, bananas, melons and raisins.
Problematic fruits	Try limiting apples (unpeeled), avocados, cantaloupe, honeydew, prunes, and watermelons for a time to see if this helps.
Problematic vegetables	These may include cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, corn, brussels sprouts, cucumber, peppers, garlic, and celery. Try limiting these for a time to see if this helps. Cooked vegetables are often better tolerated than raw.
High sugar intake	Try limiting jam, honey, pop, table sugar / brown sugar, and chocolate drinks.
Type of Fibre	<p>1. Sometimes wheat based fiber is better tolerated than other types of fibre such as legumes, nuts or seeds. To increase this type of fibre in your diet, add wheat bran to other foods. Choose whole wheat bread with 2g of fiber / serving and wheat based cereals with at least 4g of fibre per serving.</p> <p>2. Guar gum may improve symptoms (suggested dosage of 5 grams per day). This can be purchased from a pharmacy or health food store.</p>
Probiotics	There are some promising results surrounding probiotics, but much more research is needed. One product that may prove helpful is VSL#3 (available through some pharmacies).
Prebiotic	These foods promote the growth of healthy bacteria in the bowel. Food sources include: bananas, artichokes, chicory, onions, asparagus, as well as inulin (added to some foods to increase the fibre content).



## FIBRE TABLE

*The foods in the table below are good sources of fibre. Use this table to help you include high fibre foods in your diet.*

<b>A Very High Source (more than 6 grams of fibre/serving)</b>	<b>Serving Size</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High fibre bran cereal (All Bran®, Bran Buds®, 100% Bran®, check labels for other cereals)</li> <li>• Legumes (dried peas, beans, lentils), kidney beans, lima beans, baked beans, green peas</li> <li>• Dates, dried</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• 4 large</li> </ul>
<b>A High Source (4-6 grams of fibre/serving)</b>	<b>Serving Size</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pear with skin</li> <li>• Sweet Potato</li> <li>• Figs, dried</li> <li>• Prunes</li> <li>• Apricots, dried</li> <li>• Raspberries</li> <li>• Pasta, whole wheat</li> <li>• Barley, cooked</li> <li>• Blueberries</li> <li>• Brussels sprouts, cooked</li> <li>• Bran Flakes®, Corn Bran®, Raisin Bran®</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 medium</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> <li>• 5</li> <li>• 7</li> <li>• 8</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> <li>• <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup</li> </ul>
<b>A Source (2-4 grams of fibre/serving)</b>	<b>Serving Size</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole wheat, multigrain bread</li> <li>• Whole wheat pita bread</li> <li>• Brown rice, cooked</li> <li>• Baked potato with skin</li> <li>• Nuts (almonds, walnuts, peanuts)</li> <li>• Peanut butter</li> <li>• Sesame seeds</li> <li>• Orange, banana, kiwi, nectarine, peach, apple with skin</li> <li>• Strawberries</li> <li>• Most vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> pita</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• 1 medium</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup</li> <li>• 2 tbsp</li> <li>• 2 tbsp</li> <li>• 1 medium</li> <li>• 1 cup</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li> </ul>