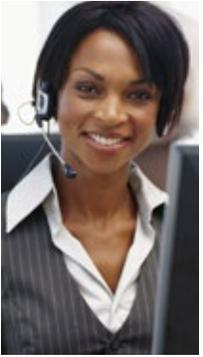




BalanceHealthSM Newsletter

April 2016 | Written by the wellness experts at eni



Understanding IBS

Irritable Bowel Syndrome or IBS is a common chronic digestive/gastrointestinal disorder that affects the large intestine (colon). IBS affects 10% - 15% of the population in the United States and is more prevalent in woman than men.

Even though it is relatively common, the exact cause of IBS is not known. Doctors believe that symptoms may result from a disturbance in the way the gut, brain, and nervous system interact, which can cause changes in normal bowel movement and sensation. Poorly coordinated signals between the brain and the intestines can make your body overreact to the changes that normally occur in the digestive process (Mayo Clinic).

IBS strikes people differently; symptoms can range from mild and inconvenient to severely debilitating. The good news is that even though symptoms can be uncomfortable and quite severe, unlike inflammatory bowel disease, IBS does not cause changes in bowel tissue or increase your risk for colorectal cancer.

Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of IBS can vary widely from person to person. Symptoms can also be unpredictable and contradictory, such as having bouts of diarrhea alternating with constipation. General symptoms of IBS include:

- Abdominal Pain
- Cramping
- Bloating
- Gas
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Mucus in the Stool

People with severe IBS may also experience depression and/or anxiety. Severe IBS can impact a person's personal and professional life, making it difficult to partake in their normal daily routines.

Treatment

Since it is not clear what causes IBS, treatment focuses on relieving symptoms. Many people can manage mild IBS through lifestyle changes such as avoiding foods that trigger IBS, drinking plenty of water, getting enough rest, and exercising.

It is also a good idea to avoid and manage stress. Although stress does not cause IBS, because there is a connection between the brain and the gut, stress can trigger or worsen symptoms.

If your IBS symptoms typically include bloating and gas it is best to avoid foods and beverages that are known to cause gas including:

- Carbonated Beverages
- Cabbage
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Beans
- Brussels Sprouts
- Chewing Gum
- Raw Apples, Peaches, and Pear
- Onions
- Dairy Products
- Sugar Substitutes

It may also help to temporarily eliminate FODMAPs. Some people are sensitive to

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types of carbohydrates called FODMAPs. FODMAPs are found in certain grains, vegetables, fruits and dairy products. However, often people are not bothered by every FODMAP food. According to the Mayo Clinic, some people may be able to get relief from IBS symptoms by sticking to a strict low FODMAP diet and then reintroducing high FODMAP foods one at a time. Refer to the chart below, courtesy of IBSFREE.net, for foods that are high and low in FODMAPs.

Common High-FODMAP* Foods or Ingredients	Popular Low-FODMAP* Alternatives
Regular milk, yogurt, ice cream	Lactose-free milk products, hemp or almond milk, sorbets
Cottage or ricotta cheese	Aged cheeses
Dried fruit, fruit juice, trail mix, fruit bars	Small portions of fresh or frozen fruit
Apples, pears, stone fruits (cherries, peaches, prunes, apricots, avocados, mango), watermelon, blackberries	Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, grapes, pineapple, cantaloupe, honeydew, kiwi, ripe bananas, oranges, lemons, limes
Broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, mushrooms, sweet corn, tomato paste, artichokes, asparagus, celery, beets, onions, garlic, leeks	Spinach, kale, lettuce, fresh tomatoes, cucumber, carrots, zucchini, bell peppers, white potatoes; small portions of green beans, sweet potato, butternut squash
Garlic, onions, ketchup, commercial salad dressings	Garlic-infused oil, chives, scallion or leek greens, leafy herbs, sweet spices, ginger, vinegars, mustards, lemon or lime juice
Regular breads made of wheat, barley or rye; cereals, pastas or baked goods made of wheat, barley or rye; high-fiber bars or cereals	Rice, cornmeal, or quinoa; breads, cereals, pastas or baked goods made of rice, cornmeal, millet, potatoes or quinoa; small portions of oats; sourdough breads
Canned, baked or refried beans (most varieties), edamame, hummus, soy milk	Firm tofu, tempeh, canned, drained chickpeas or lentils
Pistachios, cashews	Small portions of other nuts, nut butters or seeds
Sugar-free candy or gum sweetened with sorbitol, mannitol, maltitol, xylitol, isomalt; milk chocolate	Small portions of sugar-sweetened candy or gum; dark chocolate
Beverages, syrups or condiments sweetened with high-fructose corn syrup (regular soda, bottled ice tea), honey, agave	Foods sweetened with granulated sugar, evaporated cane juice, brown sugar, 100% pure maple syrup, brown rice syrup, stevia
Rum, champagne, fortified wines	Small portions wine, gin, vodka, whiskey
Instant coffee, lattes, chamomile or fennel tea	Espresso, filtered coffee, green or peppermint tea, weakly brewed black tea

If you suspect that you may have IBS it is important to see your doctor for a proper diagnosis. Your doctor will rule out more serious digestive/gastrointestinal conditions and can work with you to design a treatment plan that will effectively provide symptom relief.

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