



Nutritional & Other Lifestyle Steps to Reduce the Symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome Fact Sheet

The symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) can include gas and bloating, abdominal cramping, diarrhea, and/or constipation. In addition to seeing your physician for medical diagnosis and treatment, changing your diet may assist in reducing the symptoms of IBS.

Overall Nutritional Steps

- Avoid high-fat, greasy, fried, oily foods
- Avoid dairy and other foods containing lactose (sugar found in milk and other dairy products; often yogurt is tolerated when other dairy products are not)
- Avoid bread and other wheat products temporarily to see if symptoms subside; these products can often result in symptoms of gas and bloating
- Limit gassy foods such as broccoli, beans, onions, cauliflower, cabbage, and cucumbers
- Limit caffeine intake, including coffee (even decaffeinated), tea, chocolate, soda

Nutritional Steps for Constipation

- Increase your fluid intake to 2 liters of non-caffeinated beverages per day
- Increase your fiber with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes
- Try 1 tbsp ground flaxseed in cereal or in yogurt
- Limit gas-producing foods as noted above

Nutritional Steps for Diarrhea

- Drink plenty of fluid to prevent dehydration
- Eat well cooked vegetables and avoid skins on fruit
- Avoid raw fruits and vegetables
- Avoid all dairy products, including yogurt
- Avoid whole grain breads, brown rice, and legumes

Other Lifestyle Changes

- Stress can be a trigger for IBS; many people find that their symptoms worsen during periods of high stress. Try to find ways to relax both body and mind.
- Exercise may help in reducing the symptoms of IBS, both in relaxing the body and in helping move the bowels for those that are experiencing constipation.

**Please consult your physician to make sure these dietary suggestions are right for you. This information should not be used to replace medical care. If you are experiencing symptoms of IBS or any other gastrointestinal symptoms, please see your physician for medical diagnosis and treatment.*