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IBS AND DIETARY MANAGEMENT



What is IBS?

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common condition that affects the digestive system.

- It causes symptoms like stomach cramps, bloating, diarrhoea and constipation. These tend to come and go over time, and can last for days, weeks or months at a time.
- It's usually a lifelong problem. It can be very frustrating to live with and can have a big impact on your everyday life.
- There's no cure, but diet changes and medicines can often help control the symptoms.
- The exact cause is unknown - it's been linked to things like food passing through your gut too quickly or too slowly, oversensitive nerves in your gut, stress and a family history of IBS.

Symptoms

- The main symptoms of IBS are:
 - **stomach pain or cramps** - usually worse after eating and better after doing a poo
 - **bloating** - your tummy may feel uncomfortably full and swollen
 - **diarrhoea** - you may have watery poo and sometimes need to poo suddenly
 - **constipation** - you may strain when pooing and feel like you cannot empty your bowels fully

There may be days when your symptoms are better and days when they're worse (flare-ups). They may be triggered by food or drink.

Treatment

I. Lifestyle:

- Maintain regular bowel habits
- Manage stress - stress is highly correlated with IBS. Your second brain is in the gut. Both gut and brain are highly correlated to each other. A happy bowel gives you a happy brain and vice versa!
- Relaxation: meditation, guided visualisation, yoga, breathing activities, sports and music can all help relieve symptoms of IBS
- Do regular exercise
- Maintain a regular sleeping pattern: get into a regular, quality pattern of sleep

II. Medical (to be discussed and prescribed by physician):

- Appropriate antibiotics: Helicobacter pylori infection is associated with IBS
- Bulk forming laxatives
- Antispasmodic drugs
- Tranquilisers

Be careful: never use over-the-counter medications. Some medications, if used for long periods, will cause malabsorption, increase permeability, reduce absorption of iron, B12, minerals and increase bacterial overgrowth such as SIBO, and osteoporosis.

III. Dietary:

Objectives of a nutritional plan:

- Encourage regular eating patterns and regular bowel hygiene, adequate rest and relaxation
- Avoid constipation/diarrhoea, by increasing physical activity and consuming adequate fluids and fibres, mainly soluble (14g /1000kcal)
- Alleviate pain, symptoms and flatulence

Focus on HOW TO EAT BY:

- Eating small frequent meals.
- Eating at regular times
- Getting into a mindful and conscious eating pattern
- Chewing food very well; remember your digestion starts in the mouth and use the 20/20 rule

Learn What To Eat:

- Probiotic-rich foods are helpful: kefir, yogurt, sauerkraut, kombucha, home fermented yogurt (made out of active live culture yogurt)
- Prebiotics-rich food are essential: chicories, onion, garlic, artichoke, bananas, legumes, dandelion greens etc.
- Guar gum fibre supplementation (nutrisource fibre: up to 2 scoops TID)
- Reduce insoluble fibres as they can aggravate your case:



Insoluble Fiber: cereals, whole-wheat bread, lentils.



Soluble Fiber: barley, oats, beans, figs, prunes, sweet potatoes

- **Anti-inflammatory rich food:**
- Omega 3 -rich food such as fish can help to reduce inflammation. A supplementation is recommended in case fish is not eaten. Opt for at least two portions of fish per week
- Cumin
- Ginger
- Turmeric
- Rosemary
- Aloe vera
- Fennel
- Caraway

- **Vitamin A-rich food:** improve the tight junctions, which control what passes from the gut lumen into the body. Eat more vitamin A-rich food such as carrots, eggs, fish etc.
- **Butyrate:** an important short-chain fatty acid that supports digestive health, helps control inflammation, aids in preventing disease and reduces the severity of IBS . Butyrate is produced by apples, barley, oats, onion, garlic, rye, mushrooms and berries
- **Polyphenols-rich food:** polyphenols are natural organic components that seem to act as a prebiotic-type substance, meaning that they increase the amount of healthy bacteria in the gut, such as lactobacillus and bifidobacteria strains. Polyphenols are found in green tea, cranberries, berries, artichokes, nuts, macha, pomegranate etc.

- Immuno booster vitamins, such as zinc. Opt for zinc-rich food such as carrot, spinach and sunflower seeds

- Gluten and cow's milk products can be highly inflammatory. Always check with your dietician for appropriate elimination
- SIBO can be one the reason for IBS: bacteria migrate upwards and invade the neighborhood and cause bloating:
 1. Avoid processed food, food colouring, emulsifiers
 2. Avoid fish high in mercury such as shark, marlin, swordfish, king mackerel
 3. Avoid sugar and desserts
 4. Avoid trans fats found in convenience food
 5. Avoid cows' milk products. Sheep and goats' milk products (having A2 casein) can be less inflammatory
 6. Titanium dioxide: found in gums, bakery items, sweet and used for bleaching and whitening food

Avoid these foods after confirmation with your physician about any malabsorption - in case of SIBO

Food groups	To be avoided	Recommended
Fructose	Apples, boysenberries (blackberries), cherries (>3), figs, pears, nashi pears (Japanese), peaches, mango, watermelon, tinned fruit, dried fruit, asparagus, artichoke, sugar snap peas, Honey High fructose corn syrup Juices Sparkling wine, ciders, rum, dessert wine	Banana, blueberries, grapefruit, grapes, melon, kiwifruit, lemons, limes, mandarins, oranges, passion fruit, pawpaw, pineapple, raspberries, tomatoes
Dairy	Milk: cow, goat and sheep Cheese: fresh (cottage, ricotta, cream cheese, mascarpone) Other dairy products: yoghurt, ice cream, custard	
Artificial sweetener	Sorbitol	Sucrose, stevia, sucralose, maple syrup
Extras	Alcohol Black pepper Caffeine Chilli powder Cocoa, chocolate Garlic Red pepper Spicy food	2-3 l water Vitamins supplementation: Vit B complex, Vit D, Ca
Gas forming food	Artichoke Asparagus Avocado Barley Beer Bran Broccoli Brussel sprouts Cabbage Carbonated beverages Cauliflower Celery Coconut Cream sauces	Cucumber Eggplant Eggs Fried food Leek Lentil legumes Melon Molasses Nuts Onion Prunes Radish Raisins Turnip

Do

- Cook homemade meals using fresh ingredients when you can
- Keep a diary of what you eat and any symptoms you get – try to avoid things that trigger your IBS
- Try to find ways to relax
- Get plenty of exercise
- Try probiotics for a month to see if they help



Don't

- Delay or skip meals
- Eat too quickly
- Eat lots of fatty, spicy or processed foods
- Eat more than three portions of fresh fruit a day (a portion is 80g)
- Drink more than three cups of tea or coffee a day
- Drink lots of alcohol or fizzy drinks

