

Irritable Bowel Syndrome(IBS)

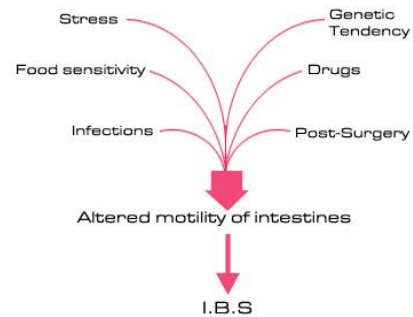
What is irritable bowel syndrome?

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a condition that prevents food from moving through intestines normally. The food may move through too slowly or too quickly. This causes bloating, increased gas, constipation, or diarrhea.

What causes IBS?

The cause of IBS is not known. Any of the following may trigger IBS symptoms:

- Certain foods or liquids such as wheat, milk, alcohol, coffee, and artificial sweeteners
- Stress
- Medical conditions such as nerve damage, celiac disease, or infectious diarrhea.
- Hormonal changes during a woman's monthly period.



What are the signs and symptoms of IBS?

Signs and symptoms of IBS may come and go. Symptoms can occur a few times a week to once a month. IBS can go away for years and suddenly return. Patient's symptoms may worsen after they eat a big meal or if they do not eat enough healthy foods. They may have any of the following:

- Abdominal pain that disappears after you have a bowel movement
- Abdominal cramps that are worse after eat.
- Gas
- Bloating abdomen
- Diarrhea, constipation, or both
- Feeling like need to have a bowel movement after just had one.
- Mucus in bowel movement.
- Feeling that have not completely emptied bowels after a bowel movement.

How IBS is diagnosed?

Doctor will ask about patient's symptoms and when they started. He will ask what triggers patients symptoms, and how long they last. Patient may need any of the following tests:

- **Blood tests** may show if an infection or other triggers of IBS have.
- **A bowel movement sample** may show what germ is causing illness.
- **A CT scan** may show problems or abnormal changes in intestine. Patient may be given contrast liquid before the scan. Patient should tell the healthcare provider if they have ever had an allergic reaction to contrast liquid.
- **A colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy** may show what is causing IBS. A tube with a light and camera on the end will be put into anus, and then moved forward into intestine. A sigmoidoscopy looks at the lower part of intestine. A colonoscopy looks at entire intestine.
- **A lactose intolerance test** may show if body does not produce enough lactase. Lactase is an enzyme need to digest the lactose (sugar) found in dairy products. If lack this enzyme, may have problems similar to those caused by IBS.

How IBS is treated?

There is no cure for IBS. The goal of treatment is to decrease symptoms. Patient may need any of the following:

- **Diarrhea medicine** helps decrease the amount of diarrhea have. Some of these medicines coat the intestine and make bowel movements less watery.
- **Laxatives** help treat constipation by moving food and liquids out of stomach faster.
- **Stool softeners** soften bowel movements to prevent straining.
- **Muscle relaxers** decrease abdominal pain and muscle spasms.

How can patient manage their IBS?

- **Eat a variety of healthy foods.** Healthy foods include fruits, vegetables, whole-grain breads, low-fat dairy products, beans, lean meats, and fish. Patient may need to avoid certain foods to decrease symptoms.
- **Drink liquids as directed.** Ask how much liquid to drink each day and which liquids are best. For most people, good liquids to drink are water, juice, and milk.
- **Exercise regularly.** Go for best exercise plan. Exercise can decrease blood pressure and improve health.
- **Manage stress.** Stress may slow healing and cause illness. Learn new ways to relax, such as deep breathing.

Reference:

Micromedex's Care Notes System Online 2.0