

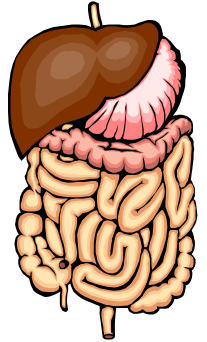
# TIPS FOR RELIEVING IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME (IBS)

## 1) KEEP A FOOD RECORD.

- This will help you identify your “trigger” foods and help you avoid these foods.
- It will also help you establish consistency in your diet and you will have something to review to monitor your progress.

## 2) EAT A DIET HIGH IN SOLUBLE FIBER.

- Soluble fiber is low residue and it is soothing to the digestive tract. It absorbs excess water in the colon, forming a gel that pushes through fecal matter, and it stabilizes and regulates intestinal contractions.
  - Foods that are naturally high in soluble fiber are:
    - oatmeal, rice, pasta
    - Potatoes
    - Beans
    - French or Sourdough bread
    - Soy
    - Barley
- Insoluble fiber, high residue foods, can be problematic for people with IBS because they are a powerful GI stimulant. It is best not to eat these foods on an empty stomach. They are very good for your health and should be included in your diet, but make sure to experiment with your tolerance level. It is better to have a wide variety of insoluble fiber foods in small amounts.
  - Insoluble fiber is found in these foods:
    - Raw fruits, vegetables, greens, sprouts, and seeds
    - Garlic, onions, leeks, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and Brussels Sprouts
    - Whole-wheat and Wheat bran
    - Whole Nuts
    - Popcorn
    - Fresh Fruit Juices- especially apple, prune, and grape
    - Rhubarb, prunes, figs, licorice all are natural laxatives



## 3) DRINK LOTS OF WATER!

- Drink a minimum of 8-8 oz. glass per day or 64 oz. total
- Healthy bowels need plenty of water and if you are following recommendation #2, then you need to also drink more water. More fiber = Need more water
- Hints to drinking more water:
  - Keep a water bottle in your car or in your bag and sip on it all day
  - Drink a glass of water before you go to bed and right when you wake up
  - Decaffeinated tea also can count, so find one you like and stock up on it...ginger peach tea is yummy.

## 4) LIMIT THE CAFFEINE!

- Caffeine stimulates the muscles in the digestive tract and can cause problems for people with sensitive colons.
- Caffeine is most commonly consumed as coffee, soft drinks, regular tea, and energy drinks.
- Caffeine will stimulate your colon about 30-60 minutes after you drink it and it also stimulates your kidneys to release more water into your bladder.
- Drink primarily DECAFFEINATED beverages to minimize muscle stimulation and dehydration

Created By: Alice B. Merritt, MPH, RD, LDN ▪ Campus Dietitian ▪ June 2007

Sources: Vorous Van, Heather. *Eating for IBS: Revolutionary Diet for Managing Irritable Bowel Syndrome*. 2000.  
Magee, Elaine MPH, RD. *Tell Me What to Eat If I Have Irritable Bowel Syndrome*. 2000.

## 5) AVOID HIGH FAT MEALS AND SNACKS.

- High fat foods can irritate the colon and are harder to digest
- Fat is better tolerated when eaten in small amounts
- Avoid or test to see if they are triggers: egg yolks, fried foods, coconut milk, oils, shortenings, butter, and margarine (may be tolerated in small amounts)
- Choose lower fat options:
  - Low-fat dairy products, skim milk, fat-free yogurt, low-fat cheese
  - Limit Red Meat: beef, pork lamb
  - Eat more chicken, turkey, fish, and other seafood (avoid poultry dark meat and eating the skin)
  - Fat-free or light Cream Cheese, Sour Cream, Mayonnaise

## 6) WATCH OUT FOR TROUBLE SPICES.

- Some people with IBS tend to not tolerate spicy foods...some spices to watch out for as triggers are:
  - Hot Sauce
  - Spicy Barbecue Sauce
  - Chili Powder
  - Hot chili peppers
  - Garlic, Curry, or Ginger

## 7) AVOID OVERDOING ALCOHOL!

- Alcohol stimulates the digestive tract by getting your digestive juices flowing, so it can cause heartburn, stomach pain, and diarrhea.
- Make sure to keep alcohol intake moderate:
  - One drink per day for women, and no more than two per day for men
- You can always order a fancy drink without alcohol such as, a virgin daiquiri, margarita, or bloody mary
- Enjoy the great taste of non alcoholic beers
- Try Sparkling water with a slice of lemon or lime

## 8) SOME FOODS ARE EXTRA GASSY.

- These foods tend to cause increased gas formation, which can cause abdominal pain and bloating
  - Dried beans and peas: black eyed peas, kidney beans, lima beans, navy beans, lentils, split peas
  - Raw vegetables
  - These vegetables can be problematic even cooked: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, cucumber, corn, onions, red/green peppers, turnips
  - Some fruits cause trouble: apples (with peel), avocados, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, prunes, watermelon
  - Other foods: beer, seeds, hard boiled eggs, soft drinks, nuts, popcorn

## 9) EAT SMALLER, MORE FREQUENT MEALS.

- Large meals can cause cramping and diarrhea. Eating smaller meals reduces the intestinal load and helps with digestion.
- Don't skip meals. Establish a regular meal routine...your intestines like routines!
- Eat a small meal or snack every 3-4 hours, so that you never get too hungry or too stuffed.
- Be especially careful when eating out. Restaurants tend to give very large portions. Try an appetizer portion, take ½ home or split the meal with a friend.

## 10) GET MOVING!

- Exercise is a powerful stress reducer!
- It also helps to get things going in your intestines and helps avoid constipation.
- Getting started is the hardest part, but once you give it a chance you will feel the benefits...more energy, less constipation, and better sleep.
- It is recommended that adults get a minimum of 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week.

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