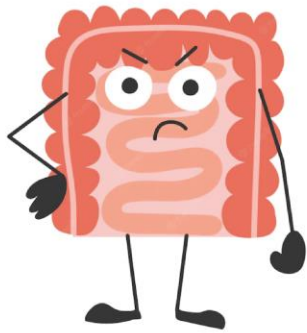


Irritable Bowel Syndrome



Overview:

- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a common disorder that affects the large intestine (colon).
- IBS causes cramping, abdominal pain, bloating, gas, and diarrhea or constipation, or both.
- So far there is no obvious cause of infection; however, it is believed that caused by several factors.
- Symptoms can be controlled with medication, diet and dealing with stress and anxiety.
- Lifestyle changes can help to manage IBS symptoms.



Symptoms

- Abdominal pain, cramping or bloating that is related to passing a bowel movement
- Changes in appearance of bowel movement
- Changes in how often you are having a bowel movement

Causes:

The precise cause of IBS isn't known. Factors that appear to play a role include:

- Poorly coordinated signals between the brain and the digestive system.
- Problems in the movement of the digestive system.
- Inflammation in the intestines.
- Infection.
- Family history.
- Food allergy.
- Some psychological problems such as: depression, anxiety and others.



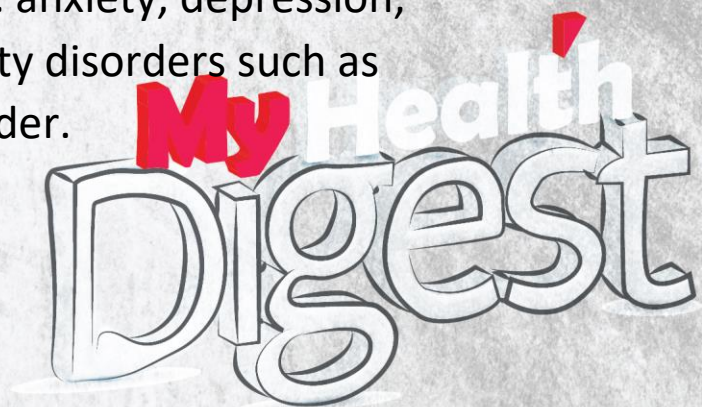
When to see a doctor

See your doctor if you have a persistent change in bowel habits or other signs or symptoms of IBS. They may indicate a more serious condition, such as colon cancer. More-serious signs and symptoms include:

- Weight loss
- Diarrhea at night
- Rectal bleeding
- Iron deficiency anemia
- Unexplained vomiting
- Difficulty swallowing
- Persistent pain that isn't relieved by passing gas or a bowel movement

Risk Factors:

- Age: Under age 45.
- Family history.
- Sex: Women are twice as likely to have IBS as men.
- Psychological problems such as: anxiety, depression, family violence, some personality disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.



Treatment:

Because the exact cause of IBS is unknown, treatment focuses on relieving symptoms so that you can live as normally as possible. Mild signs and symptoms can often be controlled by making changes in your diet and lifestyle. If the condition is more difficult and the symptoms are more severe, your doctor may prescribe some modifications to alleviate the symptoms, such as:

- Fiber supplement.
- Anti-diarrheal medications.
- Anticholinergic medications.
- Anti-biotic.



Prevention:

- Avoid foods that may irritate the colon such as: caffeine (tea, coffee, energy drinks), sugars, soft drinks, artificial sweeteners, high-fat foods, and gum.
- Avoid some foods containing carbohydrates that are hard to digest.
- Avoid foods that increase gas (broccoli, cabbage).
- Eat your meals at regular times.
- People with lactose intolerance shall be cautioned when taking dairy products.
- Drink plenty of fluids, especially water.
- Exercise regularly to reduce stress and stimulate natural contractions of intestinal muscles.
- Reduce stress by breathing deeply, relaxing... etc.
- Quit smoking.

