



Share the Wellness Tip

April 12, 2013



Controlling Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common gastrointestinal disorder. It causes stomach pain, discomfort, and bloating. In some people, IBS causes chronic constipation. In others, it causes chronic diarrhea or diarrhea that alternates with constipation. IBS affects more women than men.

The good news is that IBS is not characterized by intestinal inflammation. It is a much less serious disease than ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease, which are known as Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD).

Most people with IBS find that symptoms improve as they learn to control their condition. Only a small number of people with irritable bowel syndrome have disabling signs and symptoms. In many cases, you can control irritable bowel syndrome by managing your diet, lifestyle and stress.

You may be able to find some relief by making adjustments to your diet. According to registered dietitian, Joy Bauer, the best foods for IBS health are those that are gentle on the digestive system. By finding out what foods are your personal triggers, you can learn how to eat meals that are safe for your stomach. Bauer states, "A sensitive stomach should be treated like a fussy baby – you have to put it on a regular feeding schedule, keep it calm, and protect it from potential irritants." Here are a few mealtime guidelines to try:

- Try to eat meals at approximately the same time each day to get your body on a schedule.
- Eat smaller, more frequent meals so you don't overload at any one time.
- Slow down – sit, relax, and take time to thoroughly chew your food.

Talk to your doctor for more information about managing your diet to control IBS.

Sources: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#); [JoyBauer.com](#)

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