

About Irritable Bowel Syndrome or IBS

By IBS all kind of unpleasant symptoms occur in the colon and the stomach, and often opposite symptoms occur at different times. Learn here how to get better from it.

Irritable bowel syndrome is a functional abnormality of the colon and to some extent the rest of the digestive tract, but without any signs of abnormal anatomy, infection or inflammation that easily can explain the symptoms. The syndrome can however cause such changes secondarily. It usually begins in the age 20 to 30 and tends to last, but the sufferer can have good or bad periods.

The symptoms are of many kind, and quite opposite type of symptoms can occur at different times. Some times you have lazy bowel function, constipation and building up of stool. At other times you can have diarrhea and frequent bowel movements. Other common symptoms are bloating, stomach cramps and pain, engorged stomach, irregular time for bowel movement, irregular consistence of the stool and general fatigue.

The causes of IBS are not well known. Components in the lifestyle can cause it or aggravate it, but the exact causal lifestyle factors differ from person to person. A general bad diet or lack of exercise can contribute to the syndrome or aggravate it. In some persons IBS seems to be caused by intolerance to specific elements in the food or aggravate after consuming certain food types.

Psychological or social stress is a causal factor for some, an infection can mark the onset for others. Some patients with IBS seem to have an abnormal intestinal flora or a hidden infection. A disturbance in the nervous or hormonal control of the bowel function seems to be an important part of the disease mechanism.

IBS is diagnosed when the specific pattern of symptoms occur over longer time without any anatomical abnormalities, infections, inflammations or malignant processes that can explain the symptoms, and without celiac disease, lactose intolerance or other well known intolerance reaction. An important part of the diagnosis is therefore to exclude other causes of the symptoms.

It is difficult to totally cure IBS, but many measures can help to lessen the symptoms:

- One shall have a generally healthy diet with some fiber, enough fluid and a moderate amount of fat. A diet with very much fiber is not always beneficial though.
- One can try to eliminate food types from the diet during a couple of weeks to find out if some specific food aggravates the symptoms.
- One should exercise regularly and frequently. Condition training and all type of training that make the stomach area move is good to stimulate a healthy intestinal function.
- One should stress down by providing a good sleep habit and by adjusting a stressful social situation. One can also stress down with meditation.
- Yoga exercises can lessen the symptoms, both because they help you to stress down and stimulate the organs in the stomach.

Certain remedies can help against specific symptoms or to stimulate the stomach organs to work better:

- A supplement of husk from psyllium (*Plantago ovata*) or fibers extracted from this husk, can alleviate the functional symptoms, but insoluble fibers from bran do not usually help. The husk must be taken together with enough water. If not, intestinal obstruction can occur. Some persons also react to this husk with allergic or asthmatic symptoms.
- Medicines containing seeds for good bacteria, so-called, probiotics, seem to help many sufferers from IBS.
- A moderate amount of coffee or tea each day will often stimulate a good bowel function and help for the syndrome.

- Some herbal products can help many sufferers for the disease, like peppermint oil, kiwi fruit and Commiphora mukul resin (gugul).
- Compound remedies with extracts of the effective herbs, fibers and probiotics can be found on the market and these can be worth trying.
- Some people benefit from a colon cleansing regime followed by remedies to give a better intestinal flora and to stimulate good colon function. Packages for such regimes are also found on the market.
- When special symptoms like constipation or diarrhea are especially prominent, remedies against such symptoms can give temporary help.

Knut Holt is a business consultant and marketer focusing on the health field. At his site there are more information about health and fitness. You can also find presentation of products to improve health, and of products in the categories hobby, automotive and apparel.

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