



Nutri Patient Information Guide # 10

Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Is your life controlled by your intestinal tract with problems such as constipation, diarrhoea, bloating, flatulence and cramps?

Investigations

You have probably had numerous investigations carried out, only to be told there is nothing seriously wrong, you only have irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)! IBS is thought to affect as many as one in five people at some time in their lives and women are twice as likely to suffer as men.

Anyone Can Suffer

IBS can affect all age groups from the infant who cries with colic to the elderly. It can range in severity from a temporary interruption in the otherwise normal life, to a condition which is extremely debilitating. Those who suffer from it find it dominates their lives and can wreak havoc with work and social commitments.

Food Sensitivities

Many sufferers of IBS are told to increase the amount of fibre in their diet. Although this does improve symptoms for some, many have experienced a worsening of symptoms which could be linked to food sensitivities – regular ingestion of an allergen can cause chronic inflammation of the bowel and swelling of the abdomen, with attempts by the bowel to expel its contents as quickly as possible. This can result in griping pains and diarrhoea. The resulting impairment of digestion and assimilation can lead to fermentation of food by intestinal bacteria and subsequent gas formation.

Laboratory Tests

Other causes of IBS are parasitic infestations, candida overgrowth or bacterial infection and maldigestion problems. Carrying out a Comprehensive Digestive Stool Analysis from Great Smokies Diagnostic Laboratory can identify all these. For more information on Great Smokies Diagnostic Laboratory tests speak to your health care professional.

Alleviating Symptoms

IBS may be helped by avoidance of specific foods which may be causing an allergic response. Addition of certain nutritional supplements can help to alleviate some of the symptoms of IBS. Taking soluble fibre supplements such as psyllium husk will help those people who find constipation a problem. Apple Pectin and charcoal may also be helpful for those with sluggish bowels. These help to absorb more water making the faeces softer and so easier to pass without straining. Fibre encourages the growth of friendly bacteria in the colon which are essential in maintaining the health of the colon. Eating plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables will increase dietary fibre.

Drink Water

Drinking plenty of water (at least 1 - 1 ½ litres daily) and taking regular exercise should be incorporated into a treatment plan for IBS as these have been shown to help bowel movements.

Digestive Enzymes

People with poor digestion may well benefit from taking digestive enzymes which can improve the digestive process and thus prevent the passage of undigested food molecules through the gastrointestinal tract which may cause some IBS symptoms. A supplement containing the following enzymes may help:- Amylase - helps digest carbohydrates

Protease - helps digest protein

Sucrase - helps digest sugar

Lactase - helps digest milk sugar

Maltase - helps digest malt sugar

Cellulase - helps digest fibre

Betaine hydrochloride may be a useful supplement as this helps production of hydrochloric acid in the stomach which stimulates the pancreas to secrete digestive enzymes. These help with protein and fat digestion. However, people who have stomach ulcers or who suffer from gastritis should avoid protease and betaine hydrochloride.

Papaya Extract

Papaya extract contains a unique enzyme called papain which is an important protein-digesting enzyme which stimulate digestion and bowel movements. It is frequently used in the treatment of IBS type symptoms such as constipation, diarrhoea, bloating, cramps, wind and indigestion.

Candida

Chronic candidiasis is another problem which may cause Irritable Bowel Syndrome. Candida is a yeast that grows in the gastrointestinal tract. Its levels are kept at bay by the friendly bacteria. However, if for some reason the beneficial bacteria are depleted, the candida can soon take over. As candida multiplies in the bowel, there is a great deal of gas and abdominal bloating along with an alteration in bowel habits. Taking natural antifungal agents such as garlic, caprylic acid, grapefruit seed extract and beneficial bacteria, can be successfully employed to eliminate candida and restore the gut back to health.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information guide. If you wish to order any of the supplements mentioned, please contact your healthcare practitioner who can prescribe Nutri products specific to your personal requirements.

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