

Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Irritable bowel syndrome is a condition characterized by cramping of the intestines, abdominal bloat, gassiness and bouts of diarrhea/loose stools, and or constipation. It is not an inflammatory bowel disorder and does not produce bleeding nor is it life threatening. To some people the symptoms can be severe enough to create quality of life changes and strategies sometimes need to be adopted to plan an outing without having attacks of diarrhea.

If you have any type of chronic intestinal complaints you should see a gastro-enterologist for a complete examination. This may include an endoscopy and colonoscopy, upper G.I. series and other tests to rule out colitis, cancer, and other more severe bowel disorders. If these other serious conditions are ruled out and you have the above symptoms you may be classified as having a spastic colon or irritable bowel syndrome.

Most authorities believe the symptoms of IBS are triggered by stress or dietary influences. Most literature suggests a rather strong link to certain foods and recommends keeping a diary as to food intake and symptoms. Foods in general create contractions in the colon, but people with IBS seem to contract quicker and may have a sudden urge to defecate with cramps and diarrhea. Very often, people with this condition plan on not eating if they need to go out for an extended period of time. This frequently works and is probably the main clue as to what this condition is all about. It becomes obvious that what you put through your intestines will have an effect on the intestinal mucosa. Some foods will be triggers and create diarrhea and pain, others will be well tolerated. This condition is mostly about food sensitivities and intolerances.

There are several food categories that are extremely common offenders with IBS. High on the list of triggers is wheat, more specifically a gluten and or gliadin intolerance. Gluten is found in practically all grains, except for rice. Therefore, if you are gluten sensitive you will have problems with all breads, bagels, muffins, pasta, cereals, oatmeal and many snacks. Within wheat are also five phenolics, which are naturally occurring substances that an individual may be reactive to. They are quercetin, rutin, coumarin, galic acid and cineole. Quercetin and rutin are found in 87 common foods such as beans, chicken, beef, dairy, etc., so sensitivity to one of these phenolics can be a major factor in your condition.

Dairy sensitivity is common with IBS and dairy can be broken down to casein, whey and lactose. The more components of dairy you are sensitive to the greater the reaction will be. Salicylates are naturally found in fruits and vegetables and sensitivity to this will give you a problem even when you are eating a heart healthy diet.

The strategy of getting over this condition is to first identify the various foods or food groups, phenolics, salicylates, etc., that you are sensitive to. This can be done through

manual muscle testing sometimes referred to as kinesiology testing. A strong muscle will go weak when a substance that a person is sensitive to is placed in the mouth or when the patient holds a bio-energetic vial of the substance. The good news is that there are techniques that work extremely well to desensitize a person to the substances that they are sensitive to. This technique or treatment is referred to as bio-energetic medicine and hold tremendous promise for sufferers. One book in particular that I would recommend is "The Food Allergy Cure" written by Dr. Ellen Cutler. I am a practitioner of her work and can tell you from personal experience that for most suffers of IBS the condition can be dramatically turned around. Many foods that are not tolerated initially will become well tolerated. The dietary restrictions that are necessary in the beginning will diminish, frequently food sensitivities will be completely eliminated and a "normal" way of living will return.

The stress factor of IBS must also be considered. High amounts of stress frequently affect adrenal function and the elevated cortisol output from adrenal stress can create contractions of the colon leading to loose bowels. If you ever had to do public speaking and are not experienced, the anxiety of being in front of an audience can actually create an attack of diarrhea. Adrenal stress can be dealt with by using natural remedies that support the body and are referred to as adaptogens. This will keep the stress in the brain and minimize any negative physiological reactions to stress.

There is no reason to continue suffering. Educate yourself as to alternative approaches and take action to gain control of you health!

Dr. Silverman is a chiropractor and state certified nutritionist who has been in practice for 28 years. He has taught college level courses in holistic health and nutrition and has appeared on many T.V. and radio shows including the Gary Null show, News 12, Channel 4 and WOR radio. He has lectured and consulted for several homeopathic and nutritional companies and has two offices, one in Hauppauge (631) 724-6780 and one in Roslyn (516) 484-0776.