

Gastrointestinal Disorders (Irritable Bowel Syndrome)



What is Irritable Bowel Syndrome?

- It is not a disease, but a set of symptoms without clear causes. People who have those symptoms usually maintain a healthy digestive system in general, even though they might experience some pain in the upper or lower part of the abdomen, abdominal cramping, contractions with constipation or diarrhea. An example of this case is feeling pain after having a meal and only feeling relief after emptying the bowels.
- Over time, those affected develop better knowledge of the types of food that cause bloating or gas. Symptoms usually subside with time.
- Women are twice as likely to be affected by IBS than men.

Do I have Irritable Bowel Syndrome?

The doctor can diagnose IBS through:

- 1) Patient's complaints
- 2) Medical check-up
- 3) Lab investigations for blood and stool

To determine the causes of the symptoms, like the possibility of fungal infections or lactose intolerance in people over 50, the patient is advised to undergo a colonoscopy.



Causes of Irritable Bowel Syndrome:

- Stress from different factors, such as emotions, work, or social problems
- Poor eating habits:
 - Irregular meals
 - Having large and fatty meals
 - Lack of fiber nutrients
 - Lack of liquids and water
- Frequent use of laxatives
- Food allergies
- Gastrointestinal disorders
- Overusing dietary supplements

General dietary and health tips:

- Include a reasonable amount of fiber in your diet (20-30 grams) to help with your bowel movements
- Increase water and liquid intake up to 3 liters per day
- Avoid fatty foods such as pastries, deep-fried food and sweets
- Avoid caffeinated beverages



- Decrease sugar intake in your meals
- Avoid large and fatty meals
- Avoid meals that cause gas (chickpeas, beans, peas, radishes, onions, cabbage, lentil)
- Chew your food well and eat while you're relaxed.
- Exercise lightly and moderately
- Use laxatives only when necessary, and as per your doctor's instructions
- Avoid the habits that lead to swallowing air:
 - Eating quickly
 - Excessive drinking of soft beverages
 - Chewing gum
 - Smoking

How can meals help decrease gastrointestinal disorders?

- List all the foods that cause a bad reaction and distress to your bowels and avoid them
- Increase fiber intake in your diet by adding brown bread, whole grains, vegetables and fruits
- Eat smaller meals to avoid overwhelming your digestive system, especially if you suffer from any bowel disorders
- Every person has their own unique dietary needs. Consult a nutritionist for a diet plan that suits you best