

Irritable Bowel Syndrome is a pain in the gut

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In the past eight years, I have worked with many clients who are looking for a natural alternative for relieving their irritable bowel. Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is truly a pain in the gut for those who suffer with it. IBS is a disorder that interferes with the normal functions of the large intestine (colon). Symptoms may be crampy abdominal pain, bloating, constipation, and diarrhea.

IBS effects one in five Americans, making it one of the most common disorders diagnosed by doctors. It seems to occur more often in women than in men but this statistic may be inaccurate because it is believed men do not report IBS symptoms to doctors like women do.

One of the biggest factors that causes irritable bowel is stress and a weak immune system. There are some foods that can cause a reaction and these foods usually are high in fat. Also, some preservatives can cause the symptoms to occur. For some people IBS is disabling because they fear when it will flare up so they limit travel, social events, and even working.

Understanding that the colon is lined with lots of nerves that connect it with the brain should make it easy to understand why stress causes flare ups. The colon is partly controlled by the autonomic nervous system. This system has been proven to respond to stress.

The mucus in the colon plays a very important part in the health of the colon. It actually has antibiotics right in the mucus. This part of colon function would be supported by the immune system. The immune system is affected by stress also. So it is very easy to see why stress management would help irritable bowel syndrome.

Another key thing that occurs in the colon people don't realize is this: all our B vitamins are produced in the colon. So it can be a vicious circle. Stress causes many things to happen to the colon plus stress depletes B vitamins from our systems. B vitamins are what we need for a healthy nervous system. Keeping the colon as healthy as possible is the key to all over good health.

The colon plays a very important part in our nutritional health. The major function of the colon is to absorb water, nutrients, and salts from the partially digested food that enters from the small intestine. The contents of the colon moves slowly towards the rectum and during this passage, water and nutrients are absorbed into the body. What remains is stool.

Think about this: if we rely on the nutrients to be absorbed into our bodies from our colon, then it should make sense how important it is for our colons to function properly. If our colon moves the food through too quickly this can cause us to lose some of the valuable nutrients we need each day. Some people experience constipation and this can cause toxins to build up from the fermentation of the food. This can cause us to become sluggish, depressed, bloated, gas, and sometimes have flu-like symptoms.

Here are a few good things that will help with irritable bowel.

- Supplementation to support the nervous system because in most cases stress causes the irritable bowel symptoms to act up.

- Write down the foods that seem to cause you to have irritable bowel. Some people do have food allergies that can cause the symptoms to occur.
- Eat lots of food high in fiber or supplement with a nutritional product that adds fiber.
- Eat smaller meals at a time.
- Drink at least six glasses of water a day. The colon needs lots of water to function properly.
- Digestive enzyme supplementation can really help break down your foods much better and reduce irritable bowel symptoms greatly.

Most nutritionists would take the approach of treating the whole body not just an isolated part of the body. The body functions as a remarkable fine tuned machine. If one part of the body is not up to par then it affects the whole.

The digestive system is one of the most important parts of overall good health. So if you suffer from irritable bowel, make sure you consider how important the colon is to distributing good nutrition to the whole body and work real hard at finding out what is bringing the irritation to your colon.

Here is a list of good herbs and vitamins to consider. Remember always consult with your Physician before adding these products to your daily regimen. For help in understanding which vitamins and herbs are best, consult with a vitamin and herb specialist.

- Vitamin B Complex
- Digestive Enzymes
- Probiotics such as Acidophilus or Bifidophilus
- Flax Seed
- Psyllium
- Calcium
- Magnesium
- High potency Natural Vitamin
- Alfalfa (builds intestinal flora)
- Slippery Elm
- Echinacea
- Valerian