



How to Beat IBS

Kelly Rose looks at how to tackle the symptoms of IBS naturally

Irritable bowel syndrome, otherwise known as IBS, is a condition characterised by bouts of both constipation and diarrhoea. It can often involve bloating, discomfort and flatulence and symptoms may be relieved after passing a motion. There may be several factors involved in IBS and each person will have their own individual triggers and pattern to the condition.

Some common factors include:

- poor diet
- food intolerances
- parasites
- poor digestive functioning
- stress

Diet tips

A good, healthy, balanced diet is vital. Here are a few tips:

AVOID:

Sugar
Processed, refined foods

MINIMISE:

Alcohol, tea and coffee intake
Red meat and dairy – replace with oily fish, white fish, chicken, turkey and eggs

INCREASE:

Water
Fresh fruits and vegetables
Gentle wholegrains like oats, quinoa and brown rice

Taking a natural approach

When looking at tackling IBS from a natural angle it is vital to work out the root cause and address that specific issue. So, for example, a food intolerance test may be the first step if an intolerance is suspected. The results will help to find the right food or foods to eliminate. Similarly a parasitology test will highlight any unwanted guests contributing to symptoms. If digestion is an issue, and it is thought that secretions are low, then a broad spectrum digestive enzyme and stomach acid replacement, like betaine, may be of use.

A healthy gut lining is important and nutrients like glutamine and aloe vera may assist with the health of the digestive tract lining. Another key area to look at is gut bacteria. The live bacteria such as lactobacillus and bifidobacteria play an important role in digestive regulation and a live bacteria supplement may help to rebalance gut flora.

Tackling stress

Stress can play a major role for many people with IBS and tackling the source of this stress can help to improve symptoms. Herbs like rhodiola, which is known as an

DID YOU KNOW?

- IBS is thought to affect around one third of the British population at some point in their lives.
- One in five women reportedly suffer with the condition – twice as many as men.
- It is thought that there may be a psychological trigger for the condition as around half of sufferers link the beginning of their symptoms with a major life event.
- The FODMAP diet, which was developed in Australia, may help sufferers of IBS. It involves limiting particular foods. Specific diet types may help depending on whether you have diarrhoea or constipation.

adaptogen, are very supportive during times of stress and help the body to adapt. Relaxation techniques, yoga, meditation and gentle exercise may also be beneficial as can talking over problems with a friend or family member.

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