

## 10 steps to manage IBS symptoms

Irritable bowel syndrome (or IBS) is a diagnosis that describes a collection of gut symptoms, it is a very common condition affecting around 1 in 5 adults.

### Common symptoms include:

- Altered stool passage
- Abdominal bloating, distension, or hardness
- Symptoms made worse by eating
- Passage of mucus



It is very important that other causes for these symptoms are ruled out – such as coeliac disease or inflammatory bowel disease. This should be discussed with your doctor before your IBS diagnosis can be confirmed.

**These 10 lifestyle steps could resolve symptoms quickly and easily, sometimes simple changes are all that is needed.**



1. Regular meals – eat 3 regular meals and try not to go too long between eating
2. Try not to eat late at night, and don't skip any meals.
3. Take your time – eat slowly, chew thoroughly and try to eat in a calm environment

4. Stay hydrated – aim for 6-8 cups of fluid a day, and even more during hot weather.

5. Reduce caffeinated drink to no more than 2 mugs daily

6. Reduce fizzy drinks as much as possible.

7. Regulate portion size – smaller portion sizes more frequently may help.

8. Reduce rich or fatty foods – this includes burgers, sausages, samosas, creamy sauces, takeaways and readymeals.

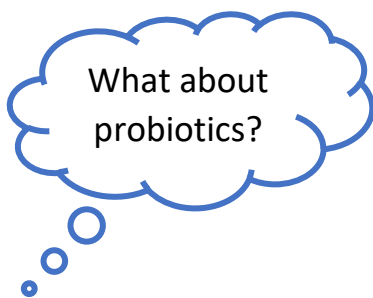
9. Limit fruit to 3 portions daily – 1 portion = 80g

10. Stay active – try walking, jogging, cycling or swimming. You could also try mindfulness, yoga or meditation to keep your mind healthy too.



Symptom	Recommendations to focus on
<b>Wind / bloating</b>	<p>Limit intake of foods that produce gas – such as beans / pulses and Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and sugar free mints or chewing gum.</p> <p>Try eating oats (in the form of porridge or breakfast cereal) and linseeds (1 tablespoon per day with 150ml fluid).</p>
<b>Diarrhoea</b>	<p>Stay hydrated – but pay particular interest to reducing caffeine and fizzy drinks.</p> <p>Avoid sugar-free sweets, mints and chewing gum or drinks containing sorbitol, mannitol and xylitol.</p> <p>You might find it helpful to reduce high fibre foods such as wholemeal bread and whole-wheat cereals.</p>
<b>Constipation</b>	<p>Try gradually increasing your fibre intake (take this very slowly). Try wholegrains, fruit and vegetables, oats.</p> <p>Stay hydrated</p> <p>Avoid eating extra wheat bran</p> <p>Try adding one tablespoon per day of brown or golden linseeds to cereal / yogurt / soup or salad – ensure you have 150ml fluid alongside.</p>

It is important to give your bowels time to adjust, so try to make one change at a time and consider keeping a food and symptom diary too.



What about probiotics?

If you decide to try a probiotic supplement or a fermented milk drink, try to take it daily for at least 4 weeks to be able to work out if it is making a difference.

If you don't feel like it helps, you could always try a different brand

If your symptoms persist after following lifestyle and dietary advice please arrange to go back to see your doctor to discuss next steps.

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