

## Dietary Guidelines for Irritable Bowel Syndrome

**Goal:**

*To help control the constipation, diarrhea, and pain of Irritable Bowel Syndrome through healthy food and lifestyle choices.*

<p><b>What is Irritable Bowel Syndrome?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a chronic condition of unknown origin. It is most likely caused by abnormal muscle contractions of the colon or large intestine causing constipation, diarrhea, gas, and bloating. The effects of diet on IBS vary from person to person. Stress, depression, and certain foods can all make the symptoms worse.</li> <li>• Keeping a food diary will help identify which foods worsen your symptoms and allow you to make changes to your diet.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Foods That May Help</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat <b>high-fiber foods</b> (25–35 grams per day) such as whole-grain breads and cereals; fruits; vegetables with the skin; and dried beans, peas, and lentils. If gas is a concern, it may be helpful to eat fewer gas-producing foods (see list below), or try Beano.<sup>TM</sup></li> <li>• Bulk-forming laxatives such as Metamucil<sup>TM</sup> (psyllium husk) help regulate bowel function, easing both constipation and diarrhea.</li> <li>• Add fiber slowly to prevent gas and bloating.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Foods That May Cause Problems</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lactose intolerance</b> is a common problem. Try lactose-free dairy, calcium-fortified soy or rice products, or Lactaid,<sup>®</sup> or Dairy Ease.<sup>®</sup></li> <li>• <b>Fatty foods</b></li> <li>• <b>Gas-producing foods</b> such as broccoli, brussels sprouts, corn, cabbage, cauliflower, garlic, cucumber, onions, peppers, radishes, turnips, sauerkraut, Swiss chard, raw apples, melons, dried beans, peas, lentils, carbonated beverages, and greasy and fatty foods.</li> <li>• <b>Hot beverages</b></li> <li>• <b>Caffeine:</b> coffee, cola beverages, tea, and chocolate.</li> <li>• <b>Alcohol</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Guidelines</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat smaller more frequent meals. Do not skip meals.</li> <li>• Eat slowly in a comfortable, relaxed environment.</li> <li>• Drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water per day, especially if you are eating a high-fiber diet.</li> <li>• Avoid tobacco products.</li> <li>• Since stress is a major contributor to IBS, it is important to manage it. Meditation, deep breathing, aerobic exercise, and sharing your concerns with another person can all help to decrease stress.</li> </ul>