



THINK HEALTHY!

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THE FAMILY
HEALTH NEWSLETTER

Irritable Bowel Syndrome Between 13% and 20% of Canadians suffer from IBS

IBS is a chronic, often debilitating, functional gastrointestinal disorder with symptoms that include abdominal pain, bloating, and altered bowel behaviours. These are constipation and/or diarrhea, or alternating between the two stool consistency extremes.

If you suffer from the following ongoing symptoms, you might have IBS:

- Abdominal Pain
- Bloating
- Constipation
- Diarrhea

IBS affects an estimated 13-20% of Canadians, depending on which criteria researchers use to assess symptoms.

The lifetime risk for a Canadian to develop IBS is 30%.

Only about 40% of those who have IBS symptoms seek help from a physician.



IBS can begin in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood and can resolve unexpectedly for periods throughout an individual's lifespan, recurring at any age.

In Canada and most Western nations, IBS seems to arise significantly more frequently in women than in men.

Although each person can have a unique IBS experience within the range of known symptoms, this condition typically decreases a person's quality of life

IBS is a functional disorder, in that the function or movement of the bowel is not quite right. Digestive pain often occurs following a meal and can last for hours.

Source: www.badgut.org/information-centre/irritable-bowel-syndrome.html

THINK HEALTHY! is a bilingual newsletter published 5 times a year by Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence with the aim of transmitting information to individuals and families on health and to better understand services offered to the population, especially to anglophones. It is distributed in the areas served by Rimouski Hospital, including the Lower Saint Lawrence, Baie-des-Chaleurs, Gaspésie, North Shore and the Lower North Shore. The newsletters are made possible through funding by Health Canada for Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN), via its Networking and Partnership Initiative Program (NPI) and its Community Health Promotion Project (CHPP). For more information, do not hesitate to contact Marie-Glaude Giroux at 418-936-3239 or mcgiroux@heritagelsl.ca.

Thirty-Second IBS Test

Please take this test to see if you might have Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

Have you had discomfort* or pain anywhere in your abdomen 2-3 times or more in the past 3 months?

If yes to the above, then:

- Does the discomfort or pain sometimes get better after a bowel movement?
- Is the discomfort or pain associated with a change in the frequency of bowel movements?
- Is the discomfort or pain sometimes associated with constipation or diarrhea?

*discomfort means an uncomfortable sensation not described as pain

If you answered “NO” to any of the questions, then it’s Good News!

It seems that you do not have IBS, however you may still want to consult a doctor if you answered “YES” to any of the questions.

If you answered “YES” to all of the questions, then we issue a Warning!

It seems that you might have IBS. You’re not alone! Many Canadians live with this common digestive disorder. There are a number of treatment options available to decrease or eliminate your symptoms, and improve your quality of life. Please read through this article carefully, and contact your physician, pharmacist, or other healthcare professional for help.

Fibre

An important step in controlling the symptoms of IBS is to increase dietary fibre from plants, which the human body cannot digest on its own.

Gradually increase dietary fibre, allowing your body to adjust to the change, making sure to increase the amount of water you drink. This will minimize any adverse effects that may arise from a sudden dietary change.

Examples of food containing fibre that will help relieve symptoms of diarrhea: apples, bananas, grapefruit, oranges, strawberries, cabbage, cauliflower, peas, potatoes, oats, barley, lentils, dried peas and beans.



Photo: PRWeb

Examples of food containing fibre that will help relieve symptoms of constipation: vegetables, cereals and whole grains.

Possible Causes

Dietary and Lifestyle Modifications

The bowel responds to how and when a person eats, so it is important to eat regular, well-balanced, moderately sized meals rather than erratic, variable meals. Some IBS symptoms may improve by allowing sufficient time for regular eating and bathroom routines.

Stress

Separate from the central nervous system, the gut has its own independent nervous system (enteric), which regulates the processes of digesting foods and eliminating solid waste. The enteric nervous system communicates with the central nervous system and they affect each other.

Many IBS patients report high levels of stress, which may relate to factors such as poor sleep habits, working too hard, and the excessive use of caffeine, alcohol, and/or tobacco.

IBS is not a psychological disorder, even though stress, depression, panic, or anxiety, may aggravate bowel symptoms. Proper exercise and rest can help reduce stress and positively influence IBS symptoms.



badgut.org

Gastrointestinal Society
Canadian Society of Intestinal Research

Useful Website

As the Canadian leader in providing trusted, evidence-based information on all areas of the gastrointestinal tract, the **GI Society** is committed to improving the lives of people with GI and liver conditions, supporting research, advocating for appropriate patient access to healthcare, and promoting gastrointestinal and liver health.

www.badgut.org

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1-866-600-4875 (toll-free)

9 Healthy Eating Tips for Children - It's never too early..

Promoting healthy eating habits with your children when they're young will help them continue to eat well throughout their lives. Young children often have small appetites, which can sometimes make meal time a challenge. Check out these ideas on how to encourage kids to eat healthy:

1. Offer small amounts of food throughout the day. Young children have small stomachs that tend to fill up quickly.
2. Don't restrict nutritious foods because of their fat content. Offer a variety of nutritious foods, including some choices that contain fat (like milk, peanut butter, and avocado).
3. Satisfy thirst with water. Encourage your children to drink water to quench their thirst and replenish body fluids.
4. Offer vegetables and fruit more often than juice. Whole fruits and veggies have more vitamins, minerals, and fibre.
5. Offer 500 mL (2 cups) of milk every day. This will help kids meet their vitamin D needs to help their bones grow strong.
6. Limit foods and drinks high in calories, fat, sugar, and salt (sodium), like cookies, chips, and soft drinks.
7. Be a good role model. Your children will be more likely to enjoy a variety of foods and try new foods if you do.
8. Let kids choose amounts for themselves. Although you are responsible to pick which foods are served throughout the day, let your children decide how much they eat.
9. Offer new foods often. Kids will be kids! If they reject an unfamiliar food the first time, offer it again later. The more often children are exposed to new foods, the more likely they are to accept them.

