



IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME (IBS)

- **IBS is when a person's colon does not work properly, so food moves too slowly or too quickly through the colon.** It can cause many uncomfortable symptoms, but many of them can be relieved or reduced with diet or lifestyle changes.
- **What are the symptoms of IBS?**
 - Gas or bloating
 - Belly pain or cramps, especially right before a bowel movement
 - Chronic diarrhea, constipation, or alternating between the two
 - Mucus in the stool
 - Feeling like you need to pass stool right after you just finished
- **Possible triggers:**
 - Dairy products
 - Alcohol
 - Artificial sweeteners
 - Fried or high fat foods
 - Stress
 - Menstrual cycle
 - Beans, cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli
 - Caffeine (like in coffee, tea, or soda)
 - Chocolate
- **What can help me feel better?**
 - Keep a food journal to identify possible foods that trigger your symptoms
 - Drink lots of fluids, especially water
 - SLOWLY increase the fiber in your diet:
 - Fruits: apples, peaches, plums, dates, grapes, raisins
 - Vegetables: carrots, peas, raw greens, etc.
 - Whole Grains & Beans: oats, rye, barley, lentils, beans
 - Nuts & Seeds: almonds, walnuts, pecans, flax seed, sunflower seeds, etc.
 - Eat smaller meals
 - Exercise regularly
 - Massage, deep breathing, yoga, and other relaxation techniques can help
 - Try to eat on a regular schedule
 - Quit smoking
- **Are there medications to treat IBS?**
 - Yes. Your doctor may be able to prescribe medications to help your symptoms if diet and lifestyle changes aren't enough.