



Living With Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)



Overview

If you have IBS, you know how frustrating it can be. It's uncomfortable and inconvenient, and it can be embarrassing. The good news is you can take steps to manage your symptoms. These tips will help.

Manage your diet

First, eat a diet that's right for you. Eat regular, nutritious meals, and drink plenty of water. Some foods and drinks cause the symptoms of IBS to flare up. Alcohol, caffeine, beans, broccoli and fatty foods are common examples. Figure out what things irritate your bowels, and avoid them. And be careful with fiber. If you don't have enough fiber, you may become constipated. But too much fiber can cause gas and cramping. So find the amount of fiber that's right for you.

Exercise regularly

Get regular exercise. This is good for your overall health, and it relieves stress. And keeping stress under control may help you avoid IBS flare-ups.

Be careful with medications

Be careful when taking over-the-counter medications for diarrhea or constipation. These are often meant for short term use, so it's very important to use them as directed. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about them.

Conclusion

If you take an active role in your care and follow your doctor's advice, you can learn to manage your IBS symptoms successfully.

