

## April is Irritable Bowel Syndrome Awareness Month

### What is IBS?

**IBS**, or irritable bowel syndrome, describes a functional disorder of the digestive tract. In other words, the bowel does not work properly. This dysfunction is not acute and occurs over months and years.

### What are the symptoms of IBS?

Some **symptoms** of IBS include diarrhea, constipation, abdominal pain, abdominal distention, excessive flatulence (gas), bloating, continual urge to defecate (have a bowel movement), and incontinence.

### How common is IBS?

**IBS** has been diagnosed in about 15% of adults in the US.

#### Subtypes of IBS

- ❖ **IBS-D**
  - ❖ A person has IBS-D if they suffer predominantly from diarrhea, or loose stools.
- ❖ **IBS-C**
  - ❖ A person with IBS-C suffers primarily from constipation.
- ❖ **IBS-A**
  - ❖ The alternating type IBS, or IBS-A, occurs when a person has a mixture of diarrhea and constipation.
- ❖ **IBS-PI**
  - ❖ Post infectious IBS, or IBS-PI, occurs after someone has had acute bacterial gastroenteritis (infection in the digestive tract). After the infection has resolved, the person continues to have GI complaints of diarrhea and/or constipation. The occurs in about one-third of patients who have had acute bacterial gastroenteritis.

### Did you know?

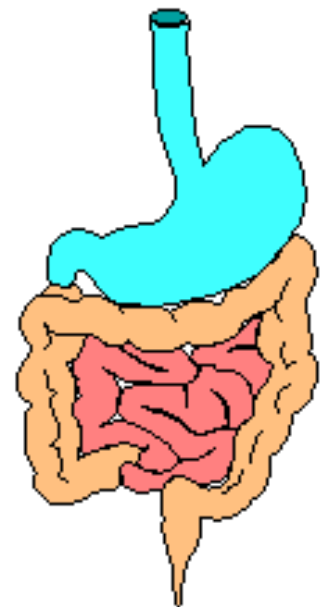
IBS is found most commonly in women. Twice as many women than men suffer from irritable bowel syndrome.

- [www.ibsgroup.org](http://www.ibsgroup.org), 2010

### Did you know?

Only about 30% of people with symptoms of IBS seek the help of a doctor or other healthcare provider.

- [www.ibsgroup.org](http://www.ibsgroup.org), 2010



# Irritable Bowel Syndrome Awareness

## Diagnosing Irritable Bowel Syndrome

IBS is usually diagnosed when a person has a group of symptoms and other diagnoses have been eliminated. A provider may use the following tests to eliminate other diseases of the digestive system.

- **Flexible sigmoidoscopy:** a flexible, lighted tube is used to visibly inspect for problems in the sigmoid colon, a part of your bowel
- **Colonoscopy:** similar to the flexible sigmoidoscopy, this test examines the entire length of the colon for any visible problems
- **Computerized Tomography (CT) Scan:** provides images of internal organs that may aid a healthcare provider in developing a diagnoses and explanation for your symptoms
- **Lactose Intolerance Tests:** lactase is an enzyme needed to digest lactose, a sugar found in dairy products; a person who is missing the lactase enzyme may have similar symptoms as those seen with IBS when they ingest dairy products
- **Blood Tests:** blood tests can rule out Celiac disease, an intolerance to wheat protein that produces symptoms similar to IBS

## For Additional Information Visit:

WebMD: [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com); The Mayo Clinic: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com); The IBS Group: [www.ibsgroup.org](http://www.ibsgroup.org)



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## Colonoscopy

