Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Introduction

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a very common modern phenomenon. Orthodox medical support can be insufficient for many people - especially those in the prime of life who do not want to accept the situation as permanent.

The synonym for this is allergic colitis. This condition is caused by abnormal muscle movements in the colon. Management of this condition also involves the management of food sensitivities. Gut motility is often under the control of the autonomic nervous system and can be affected by any disease in which the autonomic nervous system is imbalanced.

The following nutrition protocol has been designed to help support sufferers of Irritable Bowel Syndrome.

*NOTE: The suggestions in this document are not intended to replace proper medical procedures. The suggestions are offered to compliment the medical procedures with nutritional and traditional herbal supplements.

Key Codes FS-Food State, V-Vegetarian, - VE- Vegan, H- Herbal

Supplements

The following supplements that are known to be helpful are divided into three groups.

Section 1 - Supplements are considered ‘first choice’.

Section 2 - Supplements are both complementary and synergistic with the ‘first choice’ supplements.

Section 3 - Supplements are considered beneficial for preliminary digestive system cleansing. While optional, they can offer an additional positive process to improving health and wellbeing.

Section 1 Supplements – First Choice

- Multi-Vitamin & Mineral – FS-V
  This broad spectrum of vitamins, minerals and other beneficial nutritional factors help reduce the inflammation associated with irritable bowel syndrome and may help repair damage to the intestines.

- Anti-Oxidant with Co-enzyme Q10 - FS-VE
  Anti-oxidants is known to inhibit the potential of harmful free radicals that can be associated with irritable bowel syndrome.
Co-enzyme Q10 is a component of almost every cell of the body, and is known to be an important nutrient in the reduction and elimination of detrimental bacteria within the gut.

- **E500 Probiotic + Prebiotic – (V)**
  
  Probiotics are a combination of friendly gut bacteria that help enhance the digestive system, helping the absorption of nutrients and supporting the manufacture of some vitamins, increasing the profile of beneficial bacteria that are involved with the removal of harmful waste products. In addition, probiotic beneficial bacteria are also known to help reduce intestinal cramps (abdominal pain), constipation and flatulence.

  These probiotic bacteria help strengthen the functions of the digestive system. Elevated stress levels can cause the depletion of these beneficial bacteria. Beneficial bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract decline in tandem with progression of the ageing process.

  As a supplement, the suggestion is to take a course two to three times during the first year unless specific health concerns suggest more frequent use.

- **Beta-Glucans – (H-VE)**
  
  This nutrient has been shown to enhance the function of the immune system and have been found that it may help prevent many types of bacterial and viral infection in the gut.

**Section 2 Supplements – Complementary**

- **Vitamin B Complex – (FS-VE)**
  
  Nutrients within the Vitamin B complex are importantly known to act as anti-oxidants, helping to remove harmful waste products that are associated with irritable bowel syndrome, and helping to repair damaged tissue.

- **Magnesium - (FS-V)**
  
  Magnesium helps to alleviate the inflammation associated with irritable bowel syndrome via its ability to facilitate the production of superoxide dismutase (SOD). Magnesium may also help reduce the incidence of diarrhoea sometimes associated with irritable bowel syndrome.

- **Caprylic Acid Complex – (H-VE)**
  
  This a formulation contains eleven beneficial active substances which has been shown to help reduce and inhibit the growth of detrimental bacteria known as candida albicans and other detrimental micro-organisms within the digestive system, helping to improve its function. These detrimental bacteria and micro-organisms can contribute to the distress of irritable bowel syndrome.
Section 3 Supplements – Preliminary Cleansing

- Milk Thistle + Kelp –(H-VE)
  The anti-oxidant properties of Milk Thistle have a protective effect on the liver, helping to clear toxins, and promote healthy liver function. This traditional herbal remedy may also help to strengthen cell membranes.

Table of Beneficial Nutritional Supplements

This information is offered as an introduction to supplements, herbs, foods and substances known to help with Irritable Bowel Syndrome. This information is not a substitute for medical advice or treatment and it is suggested that sound advice is taken by an appropriately qualified practitioner.

The supplements highlighted are generally considered to be ‘first choice’, while the additional selected supplements are complementary.

<table>
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<th>SUPPLEMENT SUGGESTIONS</th>
<th>Formula</th>
<th>Daily Intake</th>
<th>Initial Period</th>
<th>Ongoing Intake</th>
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<td>Multivitamin-Mineral</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>1 twice daily</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>1 daily</td>
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<td>Anti-Oxidant with Co-Q10</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Herbals</td>
<td>Milk Thistle</td>
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<td>1 daily</td>
<td>If required</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Dietary Recommendations

Positive Foods
Cereal grains oats, whole brown rice, buckwheat, millet
Vegetables leaks, green cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, water cress, onions, garlic, chives, onions, leafy green vegetables, miso
Fruits freshly squeezed & diluted lemon juice, grapes (including pips), pears, apples, plums, ripe banana, dates, figs, apricots, bilberries
Legumes green peas, dried peas, barley, lentils
Teas, Herbs & Spices camomile tea, fenugreek seed tea, green tea, peppermint tea, basil, turmeric, ginger, slippery elm, ginseng
Nuts & Seeds sesame seeds, sunflower seeds (chewed thoroughly), flax seeds (soaked), celery seeds, almonds (not more than 10 per day), walnuts, hazelnuts, cashew nuts, pecan nuts, pine nuts
Fungi Shiitake mushrooms, Maitake mushrooms
Fish deep-sea white fish (occasionally) – not grilled or fried, shrimps & prawns
Dairy daily portion of live organic yoghurt

Additional Foods
Organic honey, psyllium husks

Negative Foods
Cereal grains refined cereals, refined flour products
Vegetables excess garlic
Fruits orange, orange juice, grapefruit & grapefruit juice
Legumes soya milk
Teas, Herbs & Spices
Nuts & Seeds old Brazil nuts and high intake of peanuts
Fish mackerel, shell fish
Poultry battery chicken, hens’ eggs
Meats pork & pork products, reduce intake of proteins from red meat, salami
Dairy cow’s milk, reducing dairy to a minimum, reduce non-organic cheese
Fats hydrogenated fats, refined cooking oils, fennel oil, trans-fatty acids
Food Additives tartrazine, artificial sweeteners, sulphates (preservative)
Beverages avoid excess caffeine & alcohol; avoid artificially sweetened drinks. *See Additional Comments below.
Avoid low fat foods, refined carbohydrates, white sugar (sucrose), high additive processed foods, artificial sweeteners, chocolate, pickled foods
Cooking methods fried foods, barbequed foods

Additional Comment
- As part of a healthy lifestyle, it is well understood that smoking is deleterious to good health.
- Being aware of appropriate weight management is also well understood.
- Less well discussed in relation to good health, however, is the importance of our feelings and emotions. Lack of self-esteem is so often associated with poor eating and lifestyle habits. All of us have positive aspects to our life, and focusing on these will improve our well-being.
- It is important that attention is paid to the balance between acid-forming and alkali-forming foods. The optimum balance is around 60% alkali-forming and 40% acid-forming
- Adopt a diet based on organic wholefoods, vegetables, fruits and grains.
- Raw foods such as salads and fruits should be about 20% of the daily food intake for optimum health benefits.
- There is benefit in eating in a specific order: fresh ‘live’ foods first such as salads to prepare the digestive system. Next follow cooked vegetables, then proteins. Anything starchy should be last. Eating in this order ensures food enters the digestive system in order of digestion time.
- Chew foods slowly and thoroughly, as this increases their nutritional benefits,
particularly as we get older.

- Research has shown that reducing intake of dairy products in later life is beneficial.
- It is best to reduce red meat within the diet to occasional intake. As a general guide, the best meat sources are lamb, and with regard to poultry, properly-fed and organically-reared chicken.
- White fish are generally the better option. Coastal fish such as mackerel are best reduced, as they tend to contain more of the undesirable toxic pollutants.
- As the years progress it is sensible to reduce the total intake of refined sugars.
- Avoid dehydration - take plenty of fresh water. Good quality still mineral water from a glass container is the superior form; though a good tap filter is also satisfactory. During exercise, the body loses up to 3 litres and it is good to remember that muscles are composed of 70% to 75% water. Adequate water intake is known to help reduce the feeling of tiredness and fatigue. Increased intake of water can help to reduce weight.
- Foods cooked in aluminium cookware reduce water’s ability to be used by the body.
- Avoid high intake of beverages containing caffeine, e.g. excess coffee, artificially sweetened fizzy (carbonated) and still drinks, and soft drinks high in sugars ending in ‘ose’ such as ‘sucrose’, ‘glucose’ and ‘fructose’.
- Take alcohol only in moderation as it can aggravate negative symptoms. Good quality organic wines can contribute to good health, spirits, beers and lagers less so. Organic red or white wine can be taken, but no more than 1 glass a day is suggested. Spirits should be avoided for a period of at least four months after dietary reform, and beer kept to an absolute minimum.
- Take exercise as much as possible out of doors in clean air. Prolonged exercise in air conditioning with artificial lighting should be no more than an hour at one time. Isotonic exercise has been found beneficial in reducing muscle weakness.
- Sunlight has a beneficial effect on the whole person, and is also known to alleviate the experience of fatigue that can also occur with extended periods of exposure to artificial lighting. Wearing sunglasses can reduce energy levels, as they block out some beneficial rays that can actually enhance energy. Men should try to avoid pink tinted glasses.
- Try to obtain cosmetics that are not full of chemicals. There is a saying: “If you can’t eat the ingredient safely, then it may be best not to put it on your skin.”
- Avoid shampoos and soaps containing Sodium Lauryl Sulphate.
- Antiperspirants are usually applied to help reduce body odour. However, these preparations contain aluminium, which actually gets absorbed into the body. This metal is known to produce many undesirable toxic side effects.

Specific to Irritable Bowel Syndrome

- Negative emotions have been associated with irritable bowel syndrome.
- A high intake of dietary fibre is commonly recommended in cases of irritable bowel syndrome. Gastric emptying and small bowel motility are slowed by soluble fibre. Both soluble and insoluble fibre reduces sigmoid intraluminal pressures and overcome spastic constipation. A high fibre diet has proved to be effective for constipation. Whole brown rice increases stool weight and decreases transit time, but some patients react adversely to certain dietary fibres.
- A diet high in refined carbohydrate may provoke spasm of the smooth muscle.
Dietary sugars, including lactose, fructose, sucrose and sorbitol may significantly contribute to the irritable bowel syndrome. Sucrose increases faecal bile acid and decreases intestinal transit time.

Additional Help & Support
Aside from the usual guidelines on diet, it is important with irritable bowel to make plenty of time to eat so that no food is rushed. Sit quietly and settle before beginning to eat and if possible rest for up to 30 minutes afterwards.

A glass of warm water 30 minutes before eating can also be helpful to prepare the digestive tract. This also encourages the ‘winding down’ which is needed before a meal. Since the bowel is concerned with digestion and elimination, any irritable tendency should immediately draw attention to diet. It may contain items to which you are sensitive. Dairy products and cereals (particularly wheat) are common culprits. If this applies, a four-day exclusion of the entire respective food family, followed by challenge with a typical portion, will usually arouse an acute irritable response within twelve hours and confirm your suspicions.

Far more common, as has been stated, are instances in which non-nutrient food chemicals have produced the irritation. These range from nitrate and pesticide residues from agriculture, through colours and preservatives, to sugars, paraffin’s and gums. Recourse to whole, unrefined foods may not entirely eliminate this problem, although it usually helps. Organic food is desirable here, which avoids the use of artificial chemicals at any stage in its production; but this can be hard to obtain in sufficient range, and is apt to be more expensive.

Many people find relief with a combination of the greatest possible improvements to their diet alongside regular support for their gut microflora. Before commencing supplementation with a probiotic supplement some people find benefit by confining their diet to apples or apple puree for 48 hours to weaken any un-friendly bacteria in the gut, and provide an auspicious environment for supplemental probiotics to establish.