

NUTRITION FOR IBS

KEY NUTRITION STRATEGIES

BUILD A ROUTINE

The gut works best with a routine. Aim to eat three meals at regular times each day, plus snacks as needed. Try eating slowly at a time when you feel relaxed.

DRINK PLENTY OF FLUIDS

Choose water as your main fluid. Staying hydrated will help with bloating and regularity.

EAT ENOUGH FIBER

Most people need between 25–38g of fiber each day. There are two types of fiber:

- Soluble fiber is found in oats, oat bran, ground flax, psyllium, and some fruits and vegetables. It may help to relieve both diarrhea and constipation.
- Insoluble fiber is found in wheat bran, bran cereals, whole grain products, and the skins of fruits and vegetables. It can help with constipation, but may not be well tolerated by some people with IBS.

BE MINDFUL OF HIGH-FAT MEALS AND SNACKS

Fats are important, but eating too much fat at once may cause cramping and diarrhea. Examples include deep fried foods, meals with cream and cheese, ice cream and high-fat meats. Instead, try eating a moderate amount fat spread out throughout the day.

ADJUST YOUR CAFFEINE INTAKE

Caffeine stimulates the gut and may worsen diarrhea. It can be found in coffee, tea, some sodas, energy drinks, and chocolate. If caffeine triggers symptoms, try having less to find an amount that works for you.

ABOUT IBS

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a chronic condition that affects your gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Common symptoms of IBS include abdominal pain, bloating, constipation, cramping and/or diarrhea.

You may find your symptoms come and go over time and are affected by stress, specific foods or eating patterns. The overall goal of nutrition for IBS is to manage your symptoms and get the nutrition you need for good health. Everyone is different. A personalized approach with the help of a dietitian may help you better manage symptoms.

THE FODMAP DIET

FODMAPs are short-chain carbohydrates (sugars) that are found in various types of foods. These are poorly absorbed and can increase IBS symptoms. FODMAPs include lactose (dairy), fructose (some fruits, honey), fructans (wheat, onions, garlic), GOS (beans, lentils) and polyols (some fruits, vegetables). A low FODMAP diet is a temporary elimination diet to help you learn more about your food triggers. It's not meant as a long-term diet and is best done with the guidance of an experienced dietitian.

FOOD SENSITIVITY TESTS

IgG food sensitivity tests are not evidence-based and not recommended for the diagnosis of food allergies and intolerances. Talk to your doctor and dietitian to review your options.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO MANAGING IBS

Some lifestyle habits can have an impact on IBS symptoms. Habits such as managing stress, good sleep, being physically active, and limiting alcohol can have positive impacts on your symptoms. Some supplements such as probiotics and peppermint oil may also help.

CAYA NUTRITION SERVICES

It's completely normal to feel overwhelmed with all of this information! We acknowledge that digestive symptoms can have a significant impact on quality of life. Our dietitians are here to help. At CAYA Health Centre, our dietitians can provide personalized, evidence-based guidance to help you manage your symptoms while enjoying the foods you love. Whether you want guidance with a low FODMAP diet or making small diet adjustments to manage specific digestive symptoms, we're here to support you with practical and sustainable solutions.

BOOK AN APPOINTMENT!

Finding the right fit is important. Book a **free 15-minute consultation** today and see how a dietitian can work with you to help manage your symptoms. CAYA offers in-person appointments in Vancouver and virtual appointments across British Columbia.

