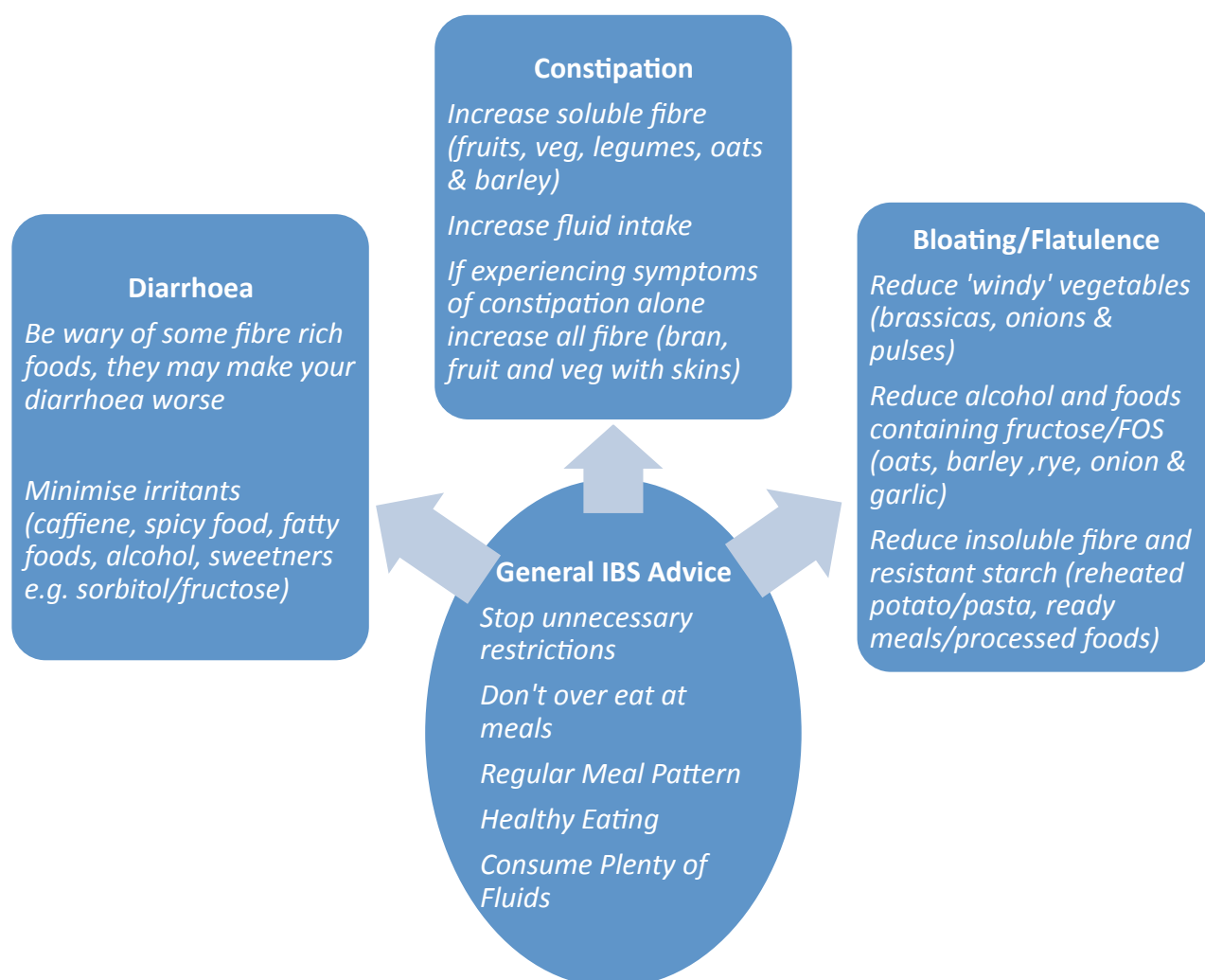


Dietary management of IBS

Diet is one aspect of IBS management that should be considered along with lifestyle. Food can play a role in managing IBS related symptoms; however some people find changing lifestyle factors has a greater impact.

When considering changes to your diet you must make changes according to your **current** symptoms. Dietary changes may alleviate symptoms, if the dietary change made is appropriate. The diagram below gives some ideas on dietary changes which may be appropriate for specific symptoms.



Intolerance

Some people may be intolerant to certain foods, but most cases of IBS are not due to food intolerance. Often IBS sufferers will start to exclude foods and even food groups from their diet, for example dairy products, in search of alleviation of symptoms. This can cause your diet to become imbalanced and your body to miss out on important nutrients.

Exclusion of milk is appropriate if lactose intolerance is suspected. Lactose intolerance is when a person lacks an enzyme called *lactase* to break down the lactose in milk. Cheeses and yoghurt do not need to be excluded as lactose content of these foods is minimal. Yoghurt may even be beneficial if it contains probiotics. If you choose to consume these dairy foods, try low fat or reduced fat versions. Full fat dairy products may cause symptoms.

If changes to your diet bring no symptom relief, add the excluded food back into your diet. There is no point in avoiding foods unnecessarily.

Probiotics

Occasionally in the bowel there can be an imbalance between 'good' and 'bad' bacteria.

Some people with IBS have found taking a probiotic product in their diet has helped alleviate symptoms.

Probiotics come in the form of fermented milk drinks, yoghurts, tablets, capsules or sachets.

There are many products available in the shops and supermarkets, they are expensive and some products are not effective.

Our bodies are designed to protect us from bacteria getting into our upper part of our bowel by having a stomach which is naturally very acidic. Probiotics therefore must be robust enough to survive the stomach and reach our bowel.

Probiotics are considered safe, however if you have a condition which has harmed your immune system you should seek advice from your Doctor or dietitian before taking them.

If you choose to try a Probiotic in your diet to alleviate symptoms, avoid changing other aspects of your diet at the same time. Take the probiotic for a period of four weeks and if there is no benefit, either try another brand or stop taking them.

FODMAP's

New research is now also pointing to another dietary cause of IBS symptoms called FODMAP's, this is an acronym for Fermentable, Oligosaccharide, Disaccharide, Monosaccharide And Polyols.

It is thought by some health experts that in some individuals the short-chain carbohydrates are not completely absorbed in the small intestine and are transported in to the large intestine where they

are fermented by the colonic bacteria. This process produces gases, fatty acids, and organic acids which cause symptoms such as bloating, diarrhoea, flatulence and gastrointestinal pain. It is important to state here that not all health professionals are convinced by this research due to the lack of in depth understanding of the mechanism behind fructose absorption in the small intestine.

The table below gives you an idea of foods considered to have high FODMAP content and foods thought to be low in FODMAP content. *

FODMAP	Foods with High Content	Foods with Low Content
Oligosaccharides (Fructans & Galactans)	Soy Beans, Kidney Beans, Baked Beans, Chickpeas, Lentils. Beetroot, Asparagus, Cabbage, Broccoli, Onion. Wheat & Rye (in large amounts) Watermelon, white peaches.	Bok Choy, Carrot, Celery, Capsicum, Lettuce, Tomato, Eggplant, Green Beans, Pumpkin, Spring Onion, Choko. Spelt & Gluten Free Cereals and Bread.
Disaccharides (Lactose)	Milk (cow and goat), Milk Powder, Evaporated Milk. Yoghurt, Soft Cheese, Sour Cream (moderate in lactose so maybe tolerated more). Custard, Ice Cream.	Lactose free milk (rice, soy). Mature Hard Cheese, Fetta, Brie, Camembert. Butter. Ice cream substitute (sorbet).
Monosaccharide (Fructose)	Honey, High Fructose Corn Syrup. Apple, Pear, Mango, Tinned Fruit in Juice. Dried Fruit (Large serves).	Maple Syrup, Golden Syrup. Banana, Raspberry, Kiwifruit, Grapes, Orange, Blueberry, Lemon, Lime, Passionfruit, Strawberries.
Polyols (sugar alcohols)	Apple, Lychee, Pear, Nashi Pear, Prunes, Apricots. Cauliflower, Snow Peas. Gums and Mints containing Artificial Sweeteners (sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol).	Banana, Blueberries, Kiwifruit, Lemon, Lime, Orange, Passionfruit, Raspberries. Sugar, glucose and other sweeteners not ending in 'ol'.

Table adapted from: Gibson, Shepherd. Evidence-based dietary management of functional gastrointestinal symptoms: The FODMAP Approach. Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology 25 (2010) 252-258

An Example Menu Excluding FODMAP's

BREAKFAST

Puffed corn, millet or rice with rice or soy milk (soy milk does contain oligosaccharides but generally it is considered to be well tolerated)

2 tblsp of fresh or frozen (no canned) strawberries or raspberries

MID-MORNING SNACK

2x large rice cakes with goat fetta and kalamata olives

LUNCH

Rice with tinned tuna, handful of spinach leaves and 1 tblsp sweet corn

2 tsp mayonnaise

An orange or kiwifruit (does contain sources of Polyols so be aware of tolerance level)

MID-AFTERNOON SNACK

2 taco shells

Fresh tomato (chopped up as a dip)

EVENING MEAL

Lean meat, poultry or fish

Potatoes – boiled, mashed or roasted

2 to 3 tblsp of Pumpkin, peas and broccoli

} (does contain sources of Polyols so be
aware of tolerance level)

DESSERT

Mini Pavlova with 1tblsp raspberries

* The Gut Foundation advises anyone who has been diagnosed by a doctor to having IBS to seek dietary advice by an Accredited Practising Dietitian for full dietary assessment and advice tailored to the individual. For specific FODMAP advice, see a dietitian trained in the diet, the diet is complex and research suggests it can be one, all, or a combination of FODMAP's that can give IBS symptoms.

General Hints for IBS

- Eat regular meals. Do not skip meals or eat late at night.
- Avoid over eating.
- Take your time at meals, sit at a table, and chew food properly.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Don't wait till you feel thirsty, you will already be dehydrated.
- Avoid triggers or irritants - such as spicy or fatty foods, alcohol, and caffeine.
- Keep a food and symptom diary, but remember symptoms are unlikely to be caused by the food just eaten.
- Do not exclude foods unnecessarily.
- Give your body time to adjust to changes in your diet and make one change at a time.
- Incorporate regular activity into your daily routine – this can help reduce stress and aid bowel function.
- Make time to relax – anxiety and stress will make IBS symptoms worse.
- Fibre – add small amounts in till you find your tolerance level.
- Fruit & Vegetables – try different fruit and veg and find the types and amounts you can tolerate

- 2 to 3 servings of dairy or alternatives
- 1 to 1.5 servings of meat or alternative protein sources (careful of pulses, they may exacerbate your symptoms)
- fluid 2-3 litres
- alcohol – avoid as much as possible, however if consumed intake should not exceed 2 standard drinks per day for men, and 1 standard drink per day for women
- avoid fatty/oily foods