

Advice for patients with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

- Have regular meals and take time to eat.
- Avoid missing meals or leaving long gaps between eating.
- Drink at least 8 cups of fluid per day, especially water or other non-caffeinated drinks, for example herbal teas.
- Restrict tea and coffee to 3 cups per day.
- Reduce intake of alcohol and fizzy drinks.
- It may be helpful to limit intake of high-fibre food (such as wholemeal or high-fibre flour and breads, cereals high in bran, and whole grains such as brown rice).
- Reduce intake of 'resistant starch' (starch that resists digestion in the small intestine and reaches the colon intact), which is often found in processed or re-cooked foods.
- Limit fresh fruit to 3 portions per day (a portion should be approximately 80 g).
- People with diarrhoea should avoid sorbitol, an artificial sweetener found in sugar-free sweets (including chewing gum) and drinks, and in some diabetic and slimming products.
- People with wind and bloating may find it helpful to eat oats (such as oat-based breakfast cereal or porridge) and linseeds (up to 1 tablespoon per day).

Other resources

- IBS network website - <http://www.theibsnetwork.org/>