

Eat high-fiber meals, drink plenty of water, and work with your doctor to decide which medications might work best for you.



Getting regular exercise and reducing stress can also help relieve symptoms of IBS.



## How Is IBS Treated?

Lifestyle changes may help relieve IBS symptoms. These changes include eating a high-fiber diet, avoiding foods that make symptoms worse, eating regular meals that are not too big, drinking enough water, getting regular exercise, and reducing stress.

Several medicines are available for IBS. The doctor can help decide which are best. Over-the-counter laxatives should be taken only under a doctor's direction, because overuse of laxatives may be harmful. Tranquilizers and antidepressants may also help people with IBS.

## DOs and DON'Ts in Managing IBS:

- ✓ **DO** learn what foods worsen your symptoms and avoid them.
- ✓ **DO** eat a good diet with high-fiber foods, including whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Fiber supplements may help if your diet does not have enough fiber.
- ✓ **DO** eat regular, balanced meals.
- ✓ **DO** drink plenty of water to help the colon work correctly.
- ✓ **DO** take medicines as instructed by your doctor.
- ✓ **DO** exercise. Try to do 30 minutes of moderate physical activity daily.
- ✓ **DO** try to lower stress. Don't take on more work or obligations than you can handle.
- ⊘ **DON'T** take over-the-counter laxatives without a doctor telling you to do so.
- ⊘ **DON'T** skip meals, and don't eat extra-large meals.

### FROM THE DESK OF

### NOTES

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

#### Contact the following sources:

- American Academy of Family Physicians  
Tel: (913) 906-6000  
Web: [www.aafp.org](http://www.aafp.org)
- American Gastroenterological Association  
Tel: (301) 654-2055  
Web: [www.gastro.org](http://www.gastro.org)
- American College of Gastroenterologists  
Tel: (703) 820-7400  
Web: [www.acg.gi.org](http://www.acg.gi.org)