

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

With irritable bowel syndrome, or IBS, the colon, also called the large intestine or large bowel, is more sensitive than normal. The colon overreacts to medicines, food such as chocolate, milk products, alcohol, caffeine and stress. It is seen in men and women but it is more common in women, and it often occurs in people under age 45.

Signs of IBS

- Cramping pain
- Gas
- Bloating
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Mucus with bowel movements

Your Care

IBS is often diagnosed after checking for other illnesses. You may have:

- An exam
- Lab tests of blood and stool
- A test to look inside the colon

It may take some time, but you will find the ways that work best to manage your IBS. You may need to:

- Avoid the medicines, food and stress that worsen your signs.
- Eat a high fiber diet. High fiber foods include wheat bran, whole grain breads and cereals, peas and beans, nuts, and fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Take medicine to decrease colon cramping.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.