



irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)

People with IBS suffer constipation, diarrhea (sometimes one alternating with the other), abdominal aches and pains (often relieved by passing a bowel motion), abdominal bloating, and flatulence.

The causes aren't fully understood, but the condition is thought to be due to abnormal functioning of the walls of the large intestine. The large intestine (also known as the colon) is a long muscular tube. The muscles in the walls alternately contract and relax, propelling the contents of the bowel forward. In IBS, the movement of these muscles is thought to be uncoordinated. Instead of contracting and relaxing in waves, they contract irregularly and tend to spasm.

The bowel is heavily supplied with nerve endings, and it's thought that IBS may be due to hypersensitivity in those nerve endings – in other words, people with IBS experience more pain from the same level of stimulation than other people. The hypersensitivity may set up a vicious cycle between the bowel and the brain, resulting in bowel symptoms.

IBS affects women roughly twice as much as men. Though it can occur at any age, it most commonly begins in the twenties or thirties.

Treatment:

- Eliminate possible food allergies/intolerances, gluten and dairy are generally the biggest offenders.
- Slippery Elm – by providing mucilage slippery elm provides relief for both diarrhea and constipation. Antispasmodic activity is provided by soothing the irritated bowel with cooling mucilage.
- Aloe Vera Juice – a digestive tonic that is soothing and anti-inflammatory to the lining of the stomach and intestines.
- Probiotics – provides beneficial bacteria to the digestive system which can help with the symptoms of IBS.
- Digestive Enzymes – helps break down food for more efficient digestion and assimilation.
- Herbs such as Chamomile, Cramp Bark, Peppermint and Wild Yam can help lessen the spasms and cramps of IBS.

To learn more about natural treatments for IBS please speak to one of our naturopaths who are available to assist you 7 days a week.

**BEFORE YOU MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR DIET
YOU SHOULD ALWAYS CONSULT YOUR
NATUROPATH/PRACTITIONER**

