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THE ADVOCATE

Health tips and resources for MCG employees and their families



GAS, BLOATING, DIARRHEA... OH MY!

Learn about Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and how to find relief.

WHAT IS IBS?

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a health issue found in your intestines (gut). There are different types of IBS, so each person may not have the same symptoms. You could have IBS with diarrhea or IBS with constipation, or both. While the cause of IBS is unknown, it can be treated. Symptoms may include: belly pain, cramping in the stomach area, gas, bloating, and change in stool.

IBS affects more than 35 million Americans, and can impact you physically, emotionally, and socially. The good news is, most people with IBS are able to control their symptoms through diet, stress management and, sometimes, medication prescribed by their doctors. If you are having symptoms more than three times a month, for more than three months, talk your doctor.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR DIGESTION

Medications to relieve your symptoms

Symptom: Diarrhea - Three or more loose or watery stools per day.

- Antidiarrheal: Imodium
- Prescriptions: Xifaxan* (oral antibiotic) and Viberzi* (opioid receptor agonist)

Symptom: Constipation - Fewer than three bowel movements per week which are often difficult to pass.

- Fiber Supplements: Metamucil, Citrucel, Benefiber, and Fiber Choice
- Laxatives:
- Stimulants: Dulcolax, Ex-Lax, and Senokot
- Osmotic: Lactulose (prescription required), Miralax, and Milk of Magnesia
- Stool softeners: Colace and Phillips'
- Prescription: Linzess* (Guanylate Cyclase-C Agonist)

Symptom: Abdominal pain/bloating

- Prescriptions: Antispasmodics (Bentyl & Levsin) and Antidepressants (Celexa, Lexapro, Prozac, Paxil, & Zoloft)
- Enteric-coated peppermint oil capsules: IBguard, Best Naturals, and Heather's Tummy Tamers
- Probiotics: Good bacteria which promote a healthy digestive system. Keep in mind that there are several oral formulations available. Studies have shown that Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium strains of bacteria are the most beneficial. (i.e Align and Physician's Choice)

* Prior authorization required



DIETARY ADVICE FOR MANAGING IBS

- Have regular meals and take time to eat
- Avoid missing meals or leaving long gaps between eating
- Drink at least eight cups of fluid per day, especially water or other non-caffeinated drinks such as herbal teas
- Restrict tea and coffee to three cups per day
- Reduce intake of alcohol and carbonated drinks
- It may be helpful to limit intake of high-fiber food
- Reduce intake of starch that is hard to digest, which is often found in processed or re-cooked foods
- Limit fresh fruit to three portions per day (a portion should be about 1 cup)
- People with diarrhea should avoid sorbitol, an artificial sweetener found in sugar-free sweets and drinks, and in some diabetic and slimming products
- People with gas and bloating may find it helpful to eat oats (such as an oat-based breakfast cereal) and linseeds (up to one tablespoon per day)

YourChoice members can take advantage of five free visits with a Registered Dietitian each year.

Learn more at manateeyourchoice.com/wellbeing-programs/nutrition or call Florey Miller at (941) 748-4501 x6410

I HAVE IBS - WHAT CAN I EAT?

Some people with irritable bowel disease may be able to reduce symptoms by paying careful attention to which foods seem to cause GI distress. Keeping a journal of what is eaten during flare-ups can help identify which foods are causing uncomfortable symptoms.

Another way to help manage the symptoms of irritable bowel disease is to follow a low FODMAP diet. **FODMAP** stands for fermentable, oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides and polyols; these are short-chain carbohydrates that occur naturally in many foods, but cause problems for some because they are poorly absorbed in the intestine (abdominal pain), draw extra water into the gut (diarrhea), and then are rapidly fermented by the bacteria present in the GI system (gas, bloating).

Learn more about FODMAP

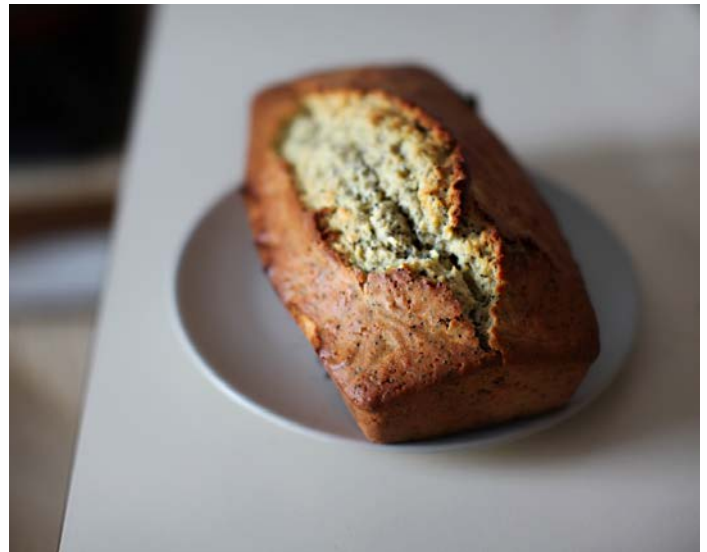
<https://www.monashfodmap.com/about-fodmap-and-ibs/high-and-low-fodmap-foods/>

RECIPE

LOW FODMAP BANANA BREAD

By Em Schwartz, MS, RDN

- ⅓ cup canola oil
- ½ cup maple syrup
- 2 large eggs
- 3 medium ripe bananas, mashed
- ¼ cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup gluten-free baking mix
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup chopped walnuts



- Preheat oven to 325°F/165°C. Grease a bread loaf pan and set aside.
- In a medium bowl, whisk together the oil and maple syrup. Add the eggs and whisk. Then add mashed bananas, milk, and vanilla. Whisk until well combined.
- In a large bowl, mix together the gluten-free flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. Add the wet ingredients into the dry mixture and stir until mixed. Gently fold in the chopped walnuts. Pour batter into the greased loaf pan.
- Bake 55-60 minutes or until done. Allow the bread to cool before slicing into 12 slices.



We invest in a holistic wellbeing approach and offer programs and services in the areas of physical, emotional, financial, community, and career health. When each of these areas are well, our employees are able to bring their best selves to work and help us make Manatee County a premier place in which to live and work and play.

HOW STRESS CAN AFFECT IBS SYMPTOMS

We don't know what comes first, stress or IBS, but we do know that stress worsens IBS symptoms. Meeting the increasing demands at home or work means that functioning under extreme stress has become an everyday occurrence for many people.

Stress and anxiety activate the "flight or fight" response. This sets off a chain reaction that increases how fast your heart beats, pumps blood to your muscles, and slows the digestive process in your stomach. After experiencing a stressful event, fluctuating hormones are supposed to return to normal levels. However, when people experience prolonged stress and anxiety, their bodies can't achieve a healthy balance.

Treating the stress and IBS connection

Although there is no cure for IBS, there are ways you can reduce stress in your life, helping to lessen your IBS symptoms:

- Try stress-relieving practices, such as meditation or yoga. By learning deep breathing and focusing on your thoughts, you may be better able to handle stress.
- Make attempts to sleep at least 7-8 hours a night. Getting plenty of sleep can provide you with the energy you need to get through your day.
- Seek professional help from a therapist. Utilize your LAMP behavioral health resources and get five free visits with either an in-house therapist or an in-network community provider. While it may be hard to talk about your IBS symptoms with another person, a therapist can help you learn skills to manage stress.
- Participate in an IBS support group. Social support from others can be a crucial factor in managing stress and controlling IBS symptoms.
- Utilize your alternative therapy benefits offered through Manatee YourChoice, such as acupuncture and massage. These have helped some people with IBS reduce their symptoms.
- Try journaling to identify how your stress management skills are improving and, hopefully, how your symptoms are getting better.

Confidential LAMP Line
(941)741-2995

IBS AND TOBACCO

If you have IBS, your gastrointestinal tract can become sensitive to triggers, including Tobacco. Smoking can damage the esophageal sphincter, allowing stomach acid to flow upwards. Nicotine also causes an over-production of stomach acid, and decreases the production of sodium bicarbonate. This causes a significant worsening of certain IBS symptoms.

People who have Crohn's Disease and smoke have more flare-ups and their symptoms can be more severe.

If/when you're ready to quit tobacco, call your Tobacco Advocate, Vanessa, at (941)748-4501 x6418.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Move Through May Challenge

May 1-30

Men's Health: Why is My Weight Stuck?

May 3 & 20

T1 Listening Session

Multiple Dates

Survival Skills Wrap Up

Multiple Dates

[Learn more and register at manateeyourchoice.com](https://manateeyourchoice.com)

YOGA FOR IBS

When using exercise to help manage IBS/digestive distress, the key word to consider is moderate. Yoga and walking are widely considered the most beneficial forms of movement to address IBS because both are low demand on the muscular system while positively impacting the nervous system to destress the body. According to the World journal of Gastroenterology, moderate exercise has been shown to improve both the physical and psychological symptoms of IBS. Aim to walk 30-45 minutes at a moderate pace each day or try some gentle yoga poses seen here. **Hold each pose for a minimum of 30 seconds, adding time as you feel ready.**



MYC FITNESS CENTER RESOURCES FOR IBS

Try a free yoga class

Monday noon – Zoom only

Tuesday 1pm - In Person

Wednesday 630am – In Person or Zoom

Friday 12pm - In Person or Zoom

Saturday 9am – Zoom only

Work with a Personal Trainer

Work with one of our Trainers to master Yoga or other movement to help you find relief from digestive issues like IBS. YourChoice Members receive 5 free visits each year.

VISIT [MANATEEYOURCHOICE.COM/FITNESS](https://www.manateeyourchoice.com/fitness) TO LEARN MORE



YourChoice Advocates Are Available to Help!

**ALLISON MINARDI**

Worksite Wellness Manager
aminardi@manateeyourchoice.com
x3667

- Ergonomics & Desk Station set up
- Posture Assessments
- Pre-Work Stretch program

**ALMA LEON, PHARM D, RPH**

Pharmacy Advocate
aleon@manateeyourchoice.com
x6406

- Consultations
- Prior Authorizations
- Cost Saving Opportunities
- Compound Prescription Reimbursement
- Pharmacy or medication related questions

**CLARIBEL GILL, MS**

LAMP Counselor & Psychiatric Clinic Coordinator
cgill@manateeyourchoice.com
x6408

- Individual, couples, and family counseling.
- Schedules appointments for in-house counseling, Psychiatric ARNP, and assists with medication management calls.

**DEBBIE MISKELL, RN**

Nurse Advocate
dmiskell@manateeyourchoice.com
x6407

- Pre-authorizations
- Proper sleep, bone health, & heart health
- Healthy Pregnancy
- Provider Referrals
- Nurse Related Questions

**FLOREY MILLER, CDE, RD**

Nutrition & Diabetes Advocate
fmiller@manateeyourchoice.com
x6410

- Help managing diabetes
- Discuss nutrition and diet
- Assess risk for diabetes

**JENNIFER RUIZ, RN**

Nurse Advocate & Health First Coord.
jrui@manateeyourchoice.com
x6409

- Nurse Advocacy
- Health First
- Bariatric Program Coordinator
- Healthy Weight Resources
- General Health Guidance
- Community Physician Referrals

**JULIE DRACKETT**

Fitness Coordinator
jdrackett@manateeyourchoice.com
x3966

- Learn stretches and strengthening moves to support mobility and decrease discomfort
- workspace ergonomic assessments
- Fitness Programs

**RANDI MCDOWALL, LCSW**

LAMP Supervisor/Care Coordinator
rmcdowall@manateeyourchoice.com
x6469

- Worksite programing regarding Behavioral Health Topics
- Help finding in-network Therapists/ Psychiatrists
- Coaching sessions for members participating in certain wellbeing programs

**VANESSA RENE, CPHT, RPHT**

Pharmacy & Tobacco Advocate
vrene@manateeyourchoice.com
x6418

- Tobacco Cessation Aids
- Prior Authorizations
- Vaccination Questions
- Compound Reimbursements
- Pharmacy Related Questions



Visit us at manateeyourchoice.com

Community Event



WORLD TAI CHI DAY

A GLOBAL DAY OF HEALTH AND HEALING

Join local instructors
for two hours of free
Tai Chi practice.
One World, One Breath

04.24.21

9-11 AM | SATURDAY
GT BRAY PARK AMPHITHEATER

ALL AGES & ALL LEVELS