

3 Steps to End IBS and Heal Your Gut



When you're diagnosed with IBS, it might seem like you're in for a lifetime of debilitating symptoms.

But once you stop believing in IBS -- and start believing you can heal -- the road to recovery opens wide. You need only steer the wheel in the right direction.

I speak from experience. I was diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome in 2011, and today I'm symptom free.

Don't get me wrong. Healing your gut won't be easy. It takes hard work, dedication, and sacrifice.

But once you get started on the path, you're no longer an IBS victim. You're a human being who's taking charge of their health.

To be clear, going from IBS patient to hopeful human takes a radical shift in mindset. A farewell to the syndrome mentality. A 100% commitment to healing. You have to go all in.

If you're skeptical, I get it. I would be too. Keep an open mind though. That's all I ask.

With that said, here are three things you can do to get on the healing path.

#1: Reject the diagnosis

You'd be surprised how little it takes to diagnose a person with irritable bowel syndrome.

There are diagnostic criteria -- yes -- but these criteria (known as Rome IV) have nothing to do with lab results, and everything to do with symptoms.

In layman's terms, here's what Rome IV says:

If you've had stomach pain for three months, and your pooping isn't normal, you have IBS.

Diagnosis made. Case closed. Welcome to the IBS club, some 760 million strong. Welcome for life.

That's the message sent. Powerful message, given the vague criteria (a couple common symptoms!) the diagnosis is based on.

The effects are the worst part. The IBS diagnosis:

- **Leads to dangerous and ineffective treatments** like acid blockers, antibiotics, antispasmodics, and antidepressants[*][*].

- **Acts as a nocebo**, the opposite of placebo. A negative expectation that drives negative health outcomes.
- **Creates chronic stress**, which damages the gut.
- **Discourages** necessary gut healing steps. If you have a syndrome, why bother?

The truth is, you can't rely on modern medicine to fix your gut. Big Pharma doesn't want to end your IBS. It makes them too much money.

The total direct costs -- just of IBS patients in the US -- is not in the millions, but in the billions. Perhaps in the hundred billions, by some estimates[*].

Big Pharma also funds The Rome Foundation, the organization that sets IBS diagnosis and treatment criteria. This ensures many more diagnoses will get made, and that nothing will change.

Balls in your court. This system won't help you, but you can help yourself. You start by committing to get better.

The first step is to reject the diagnosis. It will clear a path to better health.

#2: Eat an anti-inflammatory diet

If you remember one thing from this guide, remember this:

Your diet will make or break your gut health.

The first step towards a healthier gut is to remove the following inflammatory foods:

1. Refined sugar
2. Vegetable oils
3. Foods you're sensitive to

You, me, and everyone else on this planet would do well to limit refined sugar and vegetable oils. They are enemies of the intestine.

Why? Because both create a chronic, low-grade immune response (inflammation) in and around your gut. This inflammation, in turn, damages your intestines. Which creates more inflammation. Which creates symptoms.

Researchers have shown, in fact, that IBS patients almost always have chronic gut inflammation[*].

Specific foods can also provoke IBS symptoms. These are called food intolerances or food sensitivities, and ferreting them out takes work.

Unfortunately, the “easy fix” -- IGG / IGA food sensitivity testing -- is both unreliable and uber pricey[*]. Any benefit is likely due to the accidental elimination of a problem food.

Your best bet is a temporary elimination diet. Eliminate the most common triggers -- eggs, dairy, soy, grains (especially gluten), and nuts -- for a month, then bring them back one by one. Allow a week between each reintroduction.

If you don't feel better after this approach, Google “Low FODMAP diet” and give it a shot. Low FODMAP is restrictive, but eliminating certain classes of fermentable carbs, studies have shown, has worked for lots of people with IBS[*].

Finally, when healing a damaged gut, focus on low-carb, low-fiber foods like meat, fish, healthy fats, and broth. This is an anti-establishment view, but here's the thing: **Too much fiber feeds bad bacteria in your gut, and can make symptoms worse**[*].

Better to starve these bacteria first, limiting inflammation. Once you feel better, you can slowly bring carbs and fiber back into your life.

#3: Meditate

Believing you have a syndrome is stressful. A lack of hope is stressful. And obviously, perpetual discomfort is stressful too.

Stress, unfortunately, beats up your gut. In fact, some researchers have even suggested that IBS is primarily a “stress disease”[*].

I don't agree that IBS is a “stress disease”. That's too simplistic. But I *do* agree with the basic premise that stress is bad for your gut.

That's because chronic stress releases powerful “fight or flight” chemicals -- cortisol and corticotropin factors -- that put the immune system on alert and increase inflammation in your body. These chemicals are useful if you're being chased by a murderous psychopath, but not so useful for healing the gut.

Let me give you some examples. Researchers have shown that stress:

- Reduces stomach acid (bad for digestion)
- Degrades the protective mucosal barrier in the intestines[*]
- Makes the gut more sensitive (hypersensitive)
- Decreases beneficial gut bacteria[*]

- Aggravates both IBS and IBD[*]

By now you're probably thinking: *I'd love to stop stressing, but I just can't. Not with these symptoms.*

I hear you. That's why I put diet first. Cleaning up your diet will work wonders for your stress.

That said, a daily meditation practice can also work wonders. And since meditation reduces stress, it also reduces symptoms. An example now.

In a recent randomized controlled trial (the gold standard of science), researchers assigned 75 women with IBS to one of two interventions -- mindfulness meditation or group support -- then measured which group did better[*].

It was the mindfulness group. "Mindfulness training," concluded the authors, "has a substantial therapeutic effect on bowel symptom severity, improves health-related quality of life, and reduces distress."

To get started with meditation, either pick up a book (I like "Mindfulness In Plain English" by Bhante Gunaratana) or a guided meditation app (I like the "Waking Up" app by Sam Harris). No affiliation with either.

You'll probably notice an immediate impact on your stress levels. Maybe your symptoms too.

What's Next?

Are there other strategies to heal your gut? Of course. But I picked these three because they're simple, effective, and yield the biggest results without breaking your bank account.

Don't be fooled by their simplicity. The solution to any complex problem -- even a complex health issue -- is often the simplest one. This principle is called "Occam's Razor", and it's how scientists tend to view the world.

But simple doesn't mean easy. Healing the gut isn't easy. You have to put the work in. I hope you'll start today.

And for more ideas, tips, and tactics on ending your IBS, visit www.EndingIBS.com.

To your health,



Brian Stanton