



Lecture 9 : Medical Surgical Nursing

Irritable bowel syndrome(IBS):

What is IBS?

IBS is also known as spastic colon, irritable colon, mucous colitis, and spastic colitis. It is a separate condition from inflammatory bowel disease and isn't related to other bowel conditions. IBS is a group of intestinal symptoms that typically occur together. The symptoms vary in severity and duration from person to person. However, they last at least three months for at least three days per month.

IBS can cause intestinal damage in some cases. However, that is not common. IBS doesn't increase your risk of gastrointestinal cancers, but it can still have a significant effect on your life.

What causes IBS?

Although there are many ways to treat IBS, the exact cause of IBS is unknown. Possible causes include an overly sensitive colon or immune system. Postinfectious IBS is caused by a previous bacterial infection in the gastrointestinal tract. The varied possible causes make IBS difficult to prevent.

The physical processes involved in IBS can also vary, but may consist of:

- slowed or spastic movements of the colon, causing painful cramping
- abnormal serotonin levels in the colon, affecting motility and bowel movements
- mild celiac disease that damages the intestines, causing IBS symptoms



Other factors that may play a role include:

- Diet
- Environmental factors, such as stress
- Genetic factors
- Hormones
- Digestive organs with a high sensitivity to pain
- An unusual response to infection
- A malfunction in the muscles that move food through the body
- An inability of the central nervous system (CNS) to control the digestive system
- A person's mental and emotional state can contribute to IBS development. People with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) have a higher risk of developing IBS.

Risk factors:

- Gastroenteritis
- Being a younger or older adult
- A history of anxiety or depression
- Stress
- Overusing healthcare
- A family history of IBS
- Pain
- Sleep disorders



Signs and symptoms of IBS:

The symptoms of IBS typically include:

- Belly pains or cramps, usually in the lower half of the belly, that get worse after meals and feel better after a bowel movement .
- Abdominal pain
- Bloating and gas
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Constipation alternating with diarrhea
- Harder or looser stools than normal
- A belly that sticks out
- Mucus in your poop(stool)
- Feeling like you still need to poop (stool) after you just did
- Food intolerance
- Tiredness
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Heartburn and indigestion
- Headache
- Needing to pee (frequent urination) a lot
- Halitosis, or bad breath
- Joint or muscle pain



- Persistent fatigue
- In female irregular menses, some women have also reported that certain symptoms increase during pregnancy.

It's not uncommon for people with IBS to have episodes of both constipation and diarrhea. Symptoms such as bloating and gas typically go away after you have a bowel movement.

Symptoms of IBS aren't always persistent. They can resolve, only to come back. However, some people do have continuous symptoms .

IBS diagnosis:

Your doctor may be able to diagnose IBS based on your symptoms. They may also take one or more of the following steps to rule out other possible causes of your symptoms. There are no specific lab tests that can diagnose IBS. Your doctor will see if your symptoms match with the definition of IBS, and they may run tests to rule out conditions such as:

- Food allergies or intolerances, such as lactose intolerance and poor dietary habits.
- Medications such as high blood pressure drugs, iron, and certain antacids.
- Infection
- Enzyme deficiencies where the pancreas isn't releasing enough enzymes to properly digest or break down food.
- Inflammatory bowel diseases like ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease
- Perform flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy to look for signs of blockage or inflammation in your intestines. A colonoscopy is typically only done if your doctor suspects that your symptoms are



being caused by colitis, inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's disease), or cancer.

- Perform upper endoscopy if you have heartburn or indigestion
- X-rays
- Blood tests to look for anemia (too few red blood cells), thyroid problems, and signs of infection
- Stool tests for blood or infections
- Tests for lactose intolerance, gluten allergy, or celiac disease
- Tests to look for problems with your bowel muscles.

Treating of IBS:

There is no cure for IBS. Treatment is aimed at symptom relief. Initially, your doctor may have you make certain lifestyle changes. These “home remedies” are typically suggested before the use of medication, but the symptoms can often be managed by making changes to your diet and lifestyle.

Home remedies for IBS:

Certain home remedies or lifestyle changes may help to relieve your IBS symptoms without the use of medication. Usually, with a few basic changes in diet and activities, IBS will improve over time. Here are some tips to help ease symptoms. **Examples of these diet and lifestyle changes include:**



- Participating in regular physical exercise
- Avoid caffeine (in coffee, tea, and soda) that stimulate the intestines
- Eating smaller meals more often instead of big meals.
- Minimizing stress (talk therapy may help)
- Taking probiotics (“good” bacteria normally found in the intestines) to help relieve gas and bloating
- Avoiding deep-fried or spicy foods
- Add fiber to your diet with foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and nuts.
- Don't smoke.
- Learn to relax, either by getting more exercise or by reducing stress in your life.
- Limit how much milk or cheese you eat.
- Avoid the fried foods
- Avoid the indigestible sugars
- Eat the herbs such as ginger, peppermint, and chamomile has helped to reduce some IBS symptom.
- Consuming more oat-based foods to reduce gas or bloating
- Not skipping meals
- Eating at the same time every day
- Eating slowly
- Limiting alcohol intake
- Drinking at least 8 cups of fluid per day, for most people



- Avoiding gluten can also reduce the risk of flares. Gluten free food products and alternatives are now widely available.
- Managing fiber intake: Some people with IBS need to increase their fiber intake, while others should consume less. A balanced level of fiber in the diet can help promote healthful digestion.
- Food diary: Keeping a record of specific foods in the diet and their physical effects will help a person identify primary trigger foods.

Changes in eating habits can help control symptoms. No IBS diet works for every person. Therefore, an individual may need to go through a process of trial and error to find a consistent, comfortable diet.

IBS medication:

If your symptoms do not improve through home remedies, such as lifestyle or dietary changes, your doctor may suggest the use of medications.

As with all medication, when considering new medication, it's important to tell your doctor what you are already taking, including herbal remedies and over-the-counter medications. This will help your doctor avoid any medication that could interact with what you are already taking.

The following medications may help IBS symptoms:

- **Antispasmodic medications:** These reduce abdominal cramping and pain by relaxing the muscles in the gut.
- **Probiotics:** which are live bacteria and yeasts that are good for your health, especially your digestive system; doctors often suggest them to help with digestive problems, taking probiotic supplements may help some people. These are beneficial bacteria that support gut health. A person may not feel their effects immediately, so they should take them over a few weeks to gauge their impact on gut health over a more extended period.



- **Bulk-forming laxatives:** These can help a person relieve constipation. People should use them with caution.
- **Bulking agents:** such as psyllium, wheat bran, and corn fiber, help slow the movement of food through the digestive system and may also help relieve symptoms.
- **Antimotility medications:** These can reduce diarrhea symptoms. Options include loperamide, which slows down the contractions of the intestinal muscles.
- **Tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs):** These often help to reduce abdominal pain and cramping.
- **Alosetron (Lotronex) for severe diarrhea:** predominant IBS in females.
- **Lubiprostone (Amitiza) for constipation:** predominant IBS in females, linaclotide and lubiprostone are two drugs that are recommended by the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG).
- **Antibiotics, such as rifaximin (Xifaxan):** can change the amount of bacteria in your intestines. You take pills for 2 weeks. It can control symptoms for as long as 6 months, also it can help reduce diarrhea in people with IBS.

IBS with stress:

The automatic movement, or motility, of digestive system is controlled to a great degree by nervous system. Stress can affect nerves, making digestive system overactive. If you have IBS, the colon may be overly responsive to even slight disruption of digestive system. It is also believed that IBS is affected by the immune system, which is affected by stress.



The following may help reduce or relieve anxiety and stress symptoms:

- Relaxation techniques, including exercises or meditation
- Activities such as yoga
- Regular physical exercise
- Stress counseling or cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Hypnotherapy: This can help alter the way the unconscious mind responds to physical symptoms.

IBS with diarrhea:

IBS with diarrhea is a specific type of IBS. It primarily affects large intestine. Common symptoms of IBS with diarrhea include frequent stools and nausea. Some people with IBS with diarrhea occasionally lose bowel control.

Drugs used for treatment of diarrhea:

- **Alosetron (Lotronex)** can help relieve stomach pain and slow the bowels to relieve diarrhea, but there can be serious side effects, so it's only to be used by women.
- **Bile acid sequestrants** are cholesterol-lowering medications. Taken orally, they work in the intestines by binding bile acids and reducing stool production.
- **Eluxadoline (Viberzi)** is prescribed to help reduce bowel contractions, belly cramps, and diarrhea.
- **Loperamide (Imodium)** works by slowing down the movement of the gut. This decreases the number of bowel movements and makes the stool less watery.



IBS with constipation:

IBS with constipation is a type of IBS that typically affects adolescents and young adults. Stools that are hard and happen less often as well as constipation are the most common symptoms of this type of IBS.

Drugs used for treatment of constipation:

- Linaclotide (Linzess) is a capsule you take once daily on an empty stomach, at least 30 minutes before your first meal of the day. It helps to relieve constipation by helping bowel movements happen more often.
- Lubiprostone (Amitiza) can treat IBS with constipation in women when other treatments have not helped. Studies haven't fully shown that it works well in men. Common side effects include nausea, diarrhea, and belly pain. More serious side effects may include fainting (coma), swelling of the arms and legs, breathing problems, and heart palpitations.
- Plecanatide (Trulance) has been shown to treat constipation without the usual side effects of cramping and belly pain. The once-a-day pill can be taken with or without food. It works to increase gastrointestinal fluid in your gut and encourage regular bowel movements.
- Polyethylene glycol (PEG) is an osmotic laxative and causes water to remain in the stool, which results in softer stools.
- Tegaserod is a drug for women. It works by speeding up the motion in your gut. This effect shortens the time stool remains in the bowel, and helps lessen symptoms such as belly pain and constipation.
- Tenapanor (IBSRELA) increases bowel movements and decreases belly pain.



IBS with weight loss:

IBS doesn't affect the weight of everyone with the condition. However, it can potentially lead to weight loss if you don't eat enough to maintain your weight to avoid symptoms. Cramping may come more often right after you eat. If frequent diarrhea is one of your symptoms, your body may not be getting all of the nutrients from the food you eat. Your weight may decrease as a result of this.

IBS triggers:

For many people, the key to managing IBS symptoms is to avoid triggers. Certain foods as well as stress and anxiety can be triggers for IBS symptoms for many people. Certain foods are common triggers for many people with IBS. However, some of these foods may have a greater effect on you than others. It may help to keep a food diary for a period to learn which foods are triggers for you.

Common food "triggers" are red peppers, green onions, red wine, wheat, and cow's milk. If you're concerned about getting enough calcium, you can try to get it from other foods, like broccoli, spinach, yogurt, sardines, salmon with bones, orange juice and breads, or calcium supplements.

Common dietary triggers of cramping or bloating include foods that cause flatulence, such as: beans, celery, onions, carrots, raisins, bananas, apricots, prunes, pretzels, bagels. Other foods that can trigger flares include: dairy products, some candies, products with caffeine in them.

Living with IBS:

IBS is unpredictable. You may go for many months without any symptoms, then have a sudden flare-up. The condition can also be painful, which can have a negative impact on your quality of life and emotional state. Living with IBS may lead to feelings of depression and anxiety.