

Healthy Workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter



April 2021 Edition

CT Pipe Trades



April is IBS Awareness Month!

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is the most common functional gastrointestinal (GI) disorder. In fact, experts estimate that about 10% to 15% of the adult population in the United States have IBS. However, only 5% to 7% receive an IBS diagnosis.



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 of IBS typically include:

- Cramping
- Abdominal pain
- Bloating and gas
- Constipation
- Diarrhea

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 have continuous symptoms.

IBS is a type of functional gastrointestinal (GI) disorder. These conditions, also called disorders of the gut-brain interaction, have to do with problems in how your gut and brain work together. These problems cause your digestive tract to be very sensitive and also change how your bowel muscles contract. The result is abdominal pain, diarrhea and constipation.

What is IBS treatment?






No specific therapy works for everyone, but most people with IBS can find a treatment that works for them. Your healthcare provider will personalize your IBS treatment plan for your needs. Typical treatment options include dietary and lifestyle changes. A dietitian can help you create a diet that fits your life. Many people find that with these changes, symptoms improve:

Dietary changes:

- Increase fiber in your diet — eat more fruits, vegetables, grains and nuts.
- Identify food intolerances and sensitivities.

- Drink plenty of water — eight 8-ounce glasses per day.
- Avoid caffeine (from coffee, chocolate, teas and sodas).
- Limit cheese and milk. Lactose intolerance is more common in people with IBS.
- Try the low FODMAP diet. An approach that is gaining traction in the scientific community as a treatment for IBS. FODMAP stand for Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides, and Polyols, which are short-chain carbohydrates and sugar alcohols that are poorly absorbed by the body, resulting in abdominal pain and bloating. Foods that are generally considered to be high in FODMAPs include things like onions, beans, wheat, apples, and most dairy products. Many prebiotic supplements are also FODMAPs, including inulin, galactooligosaccharides (GOS), and fructooligosaccharides (FOS).

FOODS THAT MAY TRIGGER IBS SYMPTOMS

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| • Apples  | • Cauliflower | • Dairy products  |
| • Beans | • Gum, beverages, or foods sweetened w. fructose or sorbitol | • Fatty foods |
| • Broccoli  | • Chocolate  | • Margarine |
| • Cabbage | | • Nuts  |
| • Caffeine | | • Orange & grapefruit juices  |
| | | • Wheat products |

All right reserved Harvard Health Publications 2015

Activity changes:

- Exercise regularly.
- Don't smoke.
- Try mindfulness techniques, including mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), meditation, and hypnotherapy
- Eat smaller meals more often.
- Record the foods you eat so you can figure out which foods trigger IBS flare-ups. Common triggers are red peppers, green onions, red wine, wheat, and cow's milk.

Medical changes:

- Your provider may prescribe antidepressant medications if you have depression and anxiety along with significant abdominal pain.
- Other medicines can help with diarrhea, constipation or abdominal pain.
- Probiotics may be an option for you. These "good bacteria can help improve symptoms.
- Talk to your provider if your symptoms don't improve. You may need more tests to see if an underlying condition is causing the symptoms.

Source:
1. [https://www.healthline.com/health/irritable-bowel-symptoms/symptoms](https://www.healthline.com/health/irritable-bowel-syndrome/symptoms)
2. https://www.medicinenet.com/irritable_bowel_syndrome/article.htm
3. <https://www.healthline.com/health/irritable-bowel-syndrome/symptoms>
4. https://www.medicinenet.com/irritable_bowel_syndrome/article.htm
5. https://www.medicinenet.com/irritable_bowel_syndrome/article.htm



Triple-Pea and Asparagus Salad with Feta-Mint Dressing



Active: 25 mins

Total: 30 mins

Ingredients

- 1 cup uncooked farro
- 4 cups vegetable stock
- 1 (6-ounce) block Greek feta cheese
- 1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint, plus more for garnish
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest plus 1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped garlic, divided
- 3/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 10 ounces shelled green peas (preferably fresh, but frozen OK)
- 6 ounces sugar snap peas, trimmed
- 6 ounces snow peas, trimmed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons fine sea salt, divided
- 8 ounces asparagus, woody stems removed

Directions

Step 1

Place the farro in a large pot, and cover with the vegetable stock. Bring to a boil over high. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook until the farro is soft yet still chewy, about 25 minutes. If there is any liquid left, drain. Let farro cool.

Step 2

While farro cooks, place the block of feta in a shallow bowl. Top with 1/2 cup olive oil, chopped mint, lemon zest and juice, 1 teaspoon garlic, and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper. Using the back of a fork, mash the feta into small chunks. Set aside.

Step 3

Bring a small pot of water and kosher salt to a boil over high. Add the green peas, and blanch just until the peas are tender yet still crunchy and bright green, about 1 minute and 30 seconds. Drain immediately, and let peas cool under cold running water. (Cooling the peas quickly is important to stop them from overcooking and to keep the vibrant green color.)

Step 4

Heat a large skillet over high. When skillet is hot, reduce heat to medium, and add 1 tablespoon olive oil and remaining 1 teaspoon garlic. Cook until aromatic, about 10 seconds. Add the sugar snap and snow peas. Season 1/2 teaspoon sea salt and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, and cook, shaking the pan every now and then, until the peas are crisp-tender and bright green, 3 to 4 minutes. (A little bit of charring on the peas is great.) Remove immediately, and spread in a single layer to let cool to room temperature. (If left in a pile, they will discolor.)

Step 5

In the same skillet, heat remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil, and add the asparagus. Season with 1/2 teaspoon sea salt and remaining 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, and cook until just crisp-tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from pan, and spread in a single layer to let cool to room temperature, about 10 minutes.

Step 6

Toss together farro, peas, asparagus, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon sea salt in a bowl. Spoon the feta mixture over the farro mixture, and toss to combine. To serve, top with mint.

Asparagus— Did You Know?

Asparagus is a delicious and versatile, low-calorie vegetable that is an excellent source of essential vitamins, fiber, phytonutrients, and minerals, especially folate and vitamins A, C, E, and K. Antioxidants such as vitamin C and E prevent the accumulation of harmful free radicals and may reduce your risk for chronic disease. You can easily add it to salads, frittatas, omelets, and stir-fries.



One of the unique phytonutrients in asparagus asparagusic acid is the compound responsible for the urine odor that many people associated with asparagus. In chemical terms, asparagusic acid is unusually reactive due to the two sulfur atoms that are positioned adjacent to each other in the molecule.

Wellness Bites for your Quick Wellness Needs!

Ways to Take Chare of Your Health

Wellness is more than just eating right and exercising; it's also much more than just feeling "okay." Feeling well means feeling whole, balanced, vibrant, and alive. And there are many moving pieces that we can tap into to feel empowered in our own wellness journey.



The key focus areas to pay attention to are community, spirit, emotional health, relationships, nutrition, movement, purpose, and mindset. Within these areas, we can have a dramatic influence on our immediate and future health.

There is so much you can do to help yourself to prevent, treat, and heal dis-ease no matter what situation you're in. You have the power to change your health and these areas are where it all begins.

Community

Often there are those who feel they are doing everything right. They are eating nutrient-dense foods, getting adequate sleep, going to the gym, but they don't feel good. However, when asked about their community and social connections they're often surprised. But when we dig in and get to the real truth—loneliness, social isolation, and a lack of feeling that they belong—it becomes painfully clear that this is the missing link. And science shows us that a sense of community is correlated to longer, healthier, and happier lives. Volunteering, joining a class, and prioritizing time with loved ones are all ways to strengthen your social bonds and support your health in the process. Get involved in things you care about and your community connections will naturally fall into place.

Spirit

A sense of spirit is like a very strong self-awareness, encompassing our inner passions, values, and beliefs, everything that makes us, us. And when we are tuned in to it we are better able to navigate the ups and downs of life. Our values and personal truths keep us grounded in integrity and deepening this connection to ourselves gives us strength and resilience. No matter what your religious or spiritual practices, you can tap into your individual sense of spirit by doing daily "gut-checks" to listen to your intuition and taking quiet downtime to reflect, journal, meditate or pray, whatever helps you feel more connected to yourself.

Emotional Health

Our emotional health impacts our physical health, there is no way around it. Overcoming emotional barriers of the past; traumas and toxic beliefs are scary to unpack but when you do, you give yourself freedom and the opportunity for dynamic growth. Work with a coach, speak up for yourself, let your feelings out. Deciding to focus on your emotional health as much as your physical health will have big payoffs for your wellness and happiness throughout life.

“**Let food be thy medicine
and medicine be thy food**
Hippocrates”



Relationships

Just as community is essential to our wellbeing, so are our individual relationships. Do the people in your life lift you up, inspire you, give you joy? Or do they pull you down, cause stress, and create conflict? The relationships we experience have a cumulative effect, impacting both short- and long-term health. Recognizing and releasing a toxic relationship can be as powerful for our health as eliminating an environmental toxin. Spend time and energy supporting the relationships you do have and don't be afraid to cultivate a new friendship with someone you're interested in getting to know better, chances are they could use a new friend too.

Nutrition

Food as Medicine. What we fuel our body with affects everything; energy levels, weight, immune system, hormones, all of it. And though the nutritional landscape can get confusing with all of the diet wars (Vegan? Keto? Low-carb?) there is one major thing that all experts agree on: eat plenty of colorful vegetables. Think about eating the rainbow each and every day and you'll be on the right path. Then, incorporate clean high-quality protein sources that suit your morals, like grass-fed beef or organic gluten-free tempeh, along with plenty of healthy fats like avocados, walnuts, olive oil, and coconut. A few simple dietary tweaks can make a world of difference in how you feel.



Movement

Exercise is called a polypill because it does so much to benefit the entire body. Cardiovascular health, mood, metabolism, bone strength, the list goes on and on. But you don't have to go to the gym to move your body. Find an activity you like, something that is fun, and make it part of your wellness routine. Even a walk outside can work wonders. Make exercise a regular daily habit.

Purpose

Research shows having a sense of purpose actually relates to living a longer, happier life. When we feel we are sharing our unique gifts with others we feel useful, appreciated, validated, and meaningful. Think about what you feel you are best at, what you enjoy the most, and how you can put those things together to participate in a cause that matters to you.

Mindset

Our mindset is what brings it all together. We have to get in the right headspace to help ourselves stay healthy and reach our goals. Your mindset is your collection of attitudes—how you respond to challenges, express gratitude, manage your time, and take care of yourself are just some of the parts of your life that you can assess to get a better understanding of your mindset. One study found that those with a "stress-is-enhancing" mindset, as opposed to a "stress-is-debilitating" mindset, had fewer psychological stress responses like anxiety, depression, and anger. So take some time to shift your perspective into a more positive light and your entire body will reap the benefits.

You can nourish yourself and cultivate lasting wellness using these key principles. You can experience powerful shifts that are possible using a holistic approach that supports the body, mind, and spirit. Take your first step today.

Self Love

“WHERE THERE
IS LOVE
THERE IS
LIFE.”

~ Mahatma Gandhi

World-renowned Belgium psychotherapist and relationship specialist, Esther Perel says, “**The quality of our relationships determines the quality of our lives.**”

There’s no denying that the quality of your personal relationships affects your levels of happiness, well-being, and physical health.

Relationships, whether social or intimate, make people happy. They are a vital part of well-being as we are wired for connection and love. Love, as in Universal Love, is a way of living, not an experience. Love is not really an action that you do. “*Love is what and who you are, in your deepest essence*”.

Studies have found that healthy relationships and good mental health can contribute to lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher self-esteem, greater empathy, and more trusting and cooperative relationships. Our closest friends or life partner hold a mirror up to us, revealing our good side and our dark side and remind us that we still have not fully learned to love.

The relationship you have with yourself is crucial to your own wellbeing and also to creating healthy and happy relationships with others. Accepting yourself **as you are** is the answer to how to create healthy relationships. This starts with Self-Love. Self-love isn’t all about improving your physical body and incorporating a new self-care routine, (although very important). There is so much more to this. It looks like this....

- ◆ Self-love is lovingly and compassionately looking at those parts of yourself that you don’t particularly like
- ◆ Forgiving yourself for mistakes you made
- ◆ Forgiving those that have hurt you and releasing those resentments. Forgiveness is about freeing yourself, not the other person
- ◆ Setting healthy boundaries
- ◆ Identifying and healing traumas, insecurities, and wounding
- ◆ Addressing where you may have not been so kind to other people

This requires a lot of courage, honesty, willingness, and humility. This can be a difficult thing to do. However, I will tell you from my own personal experience, it’s worth it! And it turns into something truly amazing. The journey to Self-love is beautiful and transformative!

Article by: Cerina Savino RDN, CWWD, CHHP Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield

EWG’s 2021 Shoppers Guide to Pesticides in Produce

Nearly 70 percent of the non-organic fresh produce sold in the U.S. contains residues of potentially harmful chemical pesticides according to the EWG’s analysis of the latest data from the Federal Department of Agriculture. This year, along with the items on the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen lists, EWG is highlighting harmful fungicides detected on citrus fruits tested by the USDA, as well as in test they commissioned.



EWG’s 2021 Dirty Dozen

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Kale, collard and mustard greens
4. Nectarines
5. Apples
6. Grapes
7. Cherries
8. Peaches
9. Pears
10. Bell and hot peppers
11. Celery
12. Tomatoes

EWG’S 2021 CLEAN 15

1. Avocados
2. Sweet corn
3. Pineapple
4. Onions
5. Papaya
6. Sweet peas (frozen)
7. Eggplant
8. Asparagus
9. Broccoli
10. Cabbage
11. Kiwi
12. Cauliflower
13. Mushrooms
14. Honeydew melon
15. Cantaloupes

Key Findings:

- More than 90 percent of samples of strawberries, apples, cherries, spinach, nectarines, and leafy greens tested positive for residue of two or more pesticides.
- A single sample of kale, collard and mustard greens had up to 20 different pesticides.
- On average, spinach samples had 1.8 times as much pesticide residue by weight as any other crop tested.
- Hot peppers and bell peppers had the most pesticides detected, 115 pesticides in total and 21 more pesticides than the crops with the second highest amount- kale, collard and mustard greens.



Check out the full list on the EWG website:

<https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/summary.php>



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