

Helpful tips in IBS

Probiotics:

Probiotics have been studied by researchers for years in the area of IBS. As of yet none have been recommended for regular use as a treatment for IBS. Current IBS guidelines state that if trying a probiotic you should use the product for 4 weeks and if no improvement, discontinue its use. It is important to be aware that some probiotics contain other ingredients that may increase IBS symptoms such as dietary fibre or FODMAP's. The following probiotics could be considered but the long term effects are unknown.

Activia (2x125g pot/day)	Alflorex	VSL#3
Reduction in overall symptoms, bloating, pain, flatulence (note contains lactose)	Helps with pain, bloating, change in bowel habit	Improves flatulence
Obtibat – Bifidobacteria and fibre	Obtibat – Saccharomyces boulardi	Symprove
Contains Bifidobacterium lactis BB-12 with Fructooligosaccharide fibres. Targets constipation	Prevents infection of pathogenic bacteria. Treat Diarrhoea	Helps with pain and regular bowel movements

Gut Brain Axis - stress response:

We often focus on what we are eating as a way to manage gastrointestinal symptoms; however another area to consider is the mind. During stressful times the brain sends signals through our nervous system to the gastrointestinal tract; this can result in diarrhoea, constipation, nausea or anxiety. Yoga, deep breathing and meditation are all proven methods of reducing stress and relieving symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome and other gastrointestinal disorders. There are many applications that can be downloaded on smartphones or tablets which you may find useful. Here are some suggestions:

Headspace (free)

Guided meditations to help reduce stress focus more and sleep better.

My symptom food diary (free for android phones, £3.99 for iPhone users)

An app to track your food and symptoms to help identify food triggers.

BreathWorks Mindfulness Health (available for android users or tablets with Google Play)

Mindfulness used for relieving pain, stress and illness.