

# Yogic Management of **IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME**



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## IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

### Introduction

The Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a common and one of the major non-organic gastro-intestinal disorders. It can cause bouts of stomach cramps, bloating diarrhoea and constipation. This condition precipitates from the long-standing stress, which ultimately leads to the physical symptoms. The IBS is characterized by alternate constipation and diarrhoea or either one of the conditions may be predominating. Based on this the IBS can be classified into two types: Diarrhoea predominant or constipation predominant.

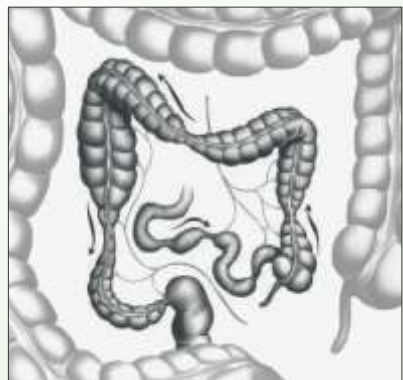
### Symptoms of IBS

The symptoms of IBS are usually worse after eating and tend to come and go in bouts. The most common symptoms of IBS are :

- Abdominal pain and cramping - often relieved by emptying the bowels
- Change in bowel habits - such as diarrhoea, constipation or sometimes both
- Bloating and swelling of the abdomen
- Excessive wind
- An urgent need to go to the toilet
- A feeling of not completely emptying the bowels
- Passing mucus from the bottom

However, symptoms can vary from person to person. Some people have constipation, which means hard, difficult-to-pass or infrequent bowel movements. Often these people report straining and cramping when trying to pass stool, but cannot eliminate any stool or they are able to eliminate only a small amount. If they are able to pass stool there may be mucus in it. Some people with IBS experience diarrhea, which is frequent, loose, watery stools. People with diarrhea frequently feel an urgent and uncontrollable need to pass the stool. Other people with IBS alternate between constipation and diarrhea.

Sometimes people find that their symptoms subside for a few months and then return, while others report a constant worsening of symptoms over time.



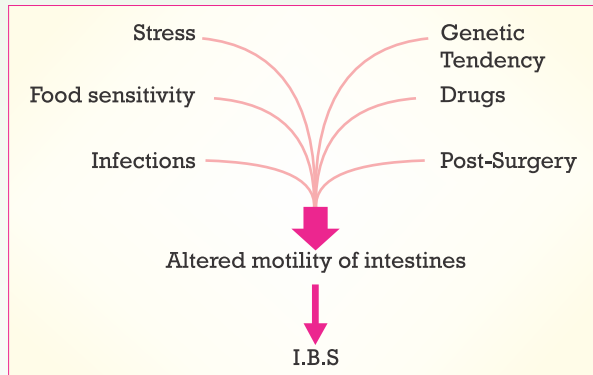


### Causes of IBS

Researchers have yet to discover any specific cause for IBS. One theory is that the colon (large bowel) of the people who suffer from IBS is sensitive and reactive to certain foods and stress. The immune system, which fights infection, may also be involved.

### Pathophysiology

The lining of the colon (epithelium), which is affected by the immune and nervous systems, regulates the flow of fluids in and out of the colon. In IBS, the epithelium appears to work properly. However, when the contents inside the colon move too quickly, the colon loses its ability to absorb fluids. The result is too much fluid in the stool. In other people, the movement inside the colon is too slow, which causes extra fluid to be absorbed. As a result, a person develops constipation.



### Triggers of IBS

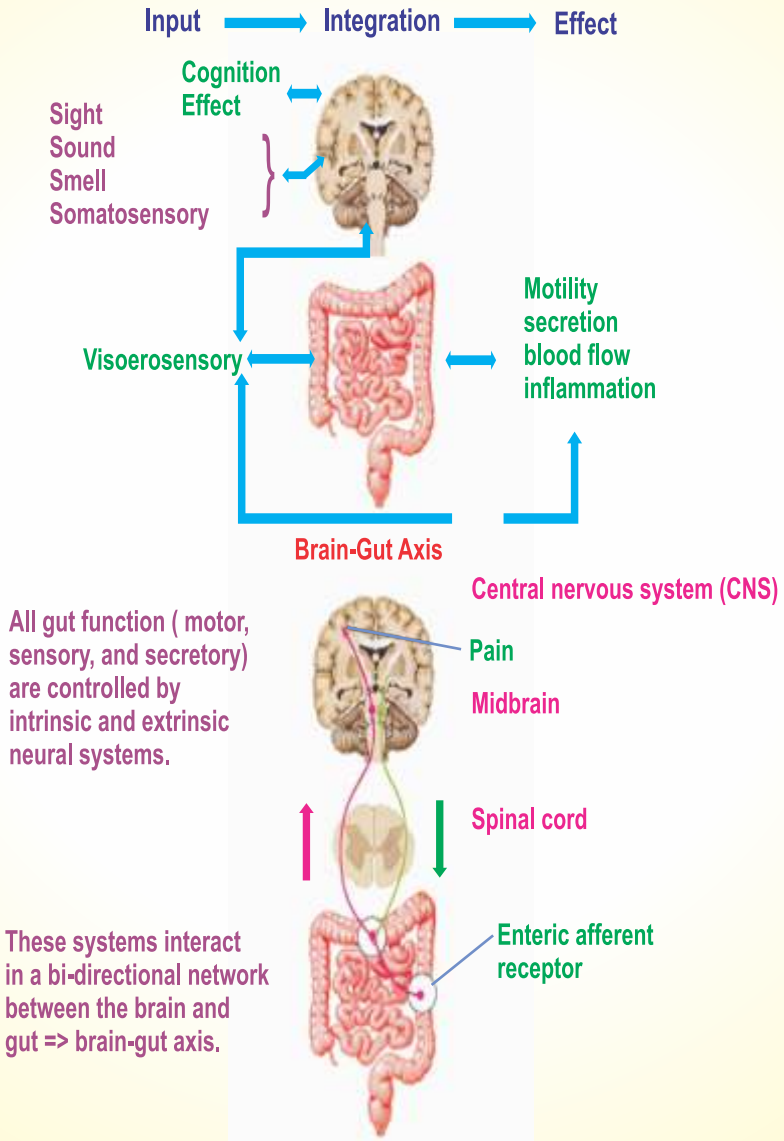
Certain foods and drinks can trigger the symptoms of IBS. Triggers vary from person to person, but the most common ones include :

- Fizzy drinks
- Alcohol
- Chocolate
- Drinks that contain caffeine, such as tea, coffee or cola
- Processed snacks, such as crisps and biscuits
- Fatty food
- Fried food

Keeping a food diary may be a useful way of identifying possible triggers in the diet.



## Irritable Bowel Syndrome (Pathophysiology)





### Management

The best way to manage the symptoms of IBS is by changing diet, lifestyle and having an understanding the nature of condition. For many people, just careful eating reduces IBS symptoms.

Drinking six to eight glasses of plain water a day is important. Drinking carbonated beverages, such as sodas, may result in gas and cause discomfort. Large meals can cause cramping and diarrhoea, so eating smaller meals more often or eating smaller portions, may help IBS symptoms. Eating meals that are low in fat and high in carbohydrates such as pasta, rice, cereals, fruits and vegetables may help.

### Dietary Guidelines

- ❖ Eat at regular times. Try not to skip meals or go long periods of time without food. Empty the stomach, more sensitive it may be.
- ❖ Chew thoroughly and eat at a leisurely pace.
- ❖ Eat a balanced and varied diet.
- ❖ Gradually increase the intake of fiber.
- ❖ When stomach is empty, eat soluble fiber foods first. Make soluble fiber foods a large component of each meal.
- ❖ Drink plenty of fluids, especially water (at least 6-8 glasses a day)
- ❖ Eliminate all red meat, dairy, fried foods, egg yolks, coffee, soda and alcohol from the diet. These are the most common triggers of IBS.
- ❖ Limit foods high in fat. Eat a source of soluble fiber first - never eat high fat foods on an empty stomach.
- ❖ Eat green salads at the end of the meals (small portions with non-fat-dressing).
- ❖ Fibers are substances in plant foods that we do not digest and are useful in normalizing bowel function.

Fiber functions like a sponge by attracting water into the digestive tract, softening stools and preventing constipation. On the flip side, fiber is also useful for adding bulk to the stool which is helpful when diarrhea is present.

Bitter foods can improve the whole upper digestive system's function and enhance the absorption of nutrients. Try adding some bitters to meals.



## Lifestyle Guidelines

- ❖ Exercise regularly – 30 to 60 minutes of moderate exercise every day.
- ❖ Daily practice of Yoga can significantly reduce stress-related symptoms.
- ❖ Pay attention to the body's signals. When feeling the urge to move the bowels, take the time to do so.
- ❖ Make sleep a priority—inadequate sleep reduces the body's ability to manage stress effectively.

## Yogic management :

Since one of the basic causative factor is stress, every effort should be made to root out the stress. Simultaneously, the management of physical symptoms, if any, has to be taken care. Efforts should also be made to rule out the organic involvement of the disease.

The specify yogic practices recommended for the treatment of IBS are :

- a. **Kriyas :** Kapalabhati, Agnisara, Nauli, Shankaprakshalana.
- b. **Suryanamaskara**
- c. **Selected practices of Yogic Sukshma vyayama :** Udara shakti vikasaka kriya
- d. **Yogasanas :** Uttanapadasana, Pawanamuktasana, Sarvangasana, Sarala Matsyasana, Bhujangasana, Dhanurasana, Gomukhasana, Vajrasana, Shashankasana, Ushtrasana, Marjariasana, Vakrasana, Tadasana, Katichakrasana
- e. **Pranayama :** Nadishodhana Pranayama, Suryanadi Pranayama, Bhramari, Bhastrika.
- f. **Relaxation :** Shavasana, Yoga Nidra
- g. **Meditation :** Simple breath watching, Om chanting, Om Meditation

**Disclaimer : This literature is for general awareness about disease management through Yoga. It should not be considered as treatment prescription.**





## YOGIC PRACTICES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME



**Kapalbhati Kriya**



**Nauli**



**Suryanamaskar**



**Tadasana**



**Katichakrasana**



**Ardha Matsyendrasana**



**Pavanamuktasana**



**Sarvangasana**



**Matsyasana**



**Vajrasana**



**Gomukhasana**



**Ushtrasana**



**Marjari asana**



**Shashankasana**



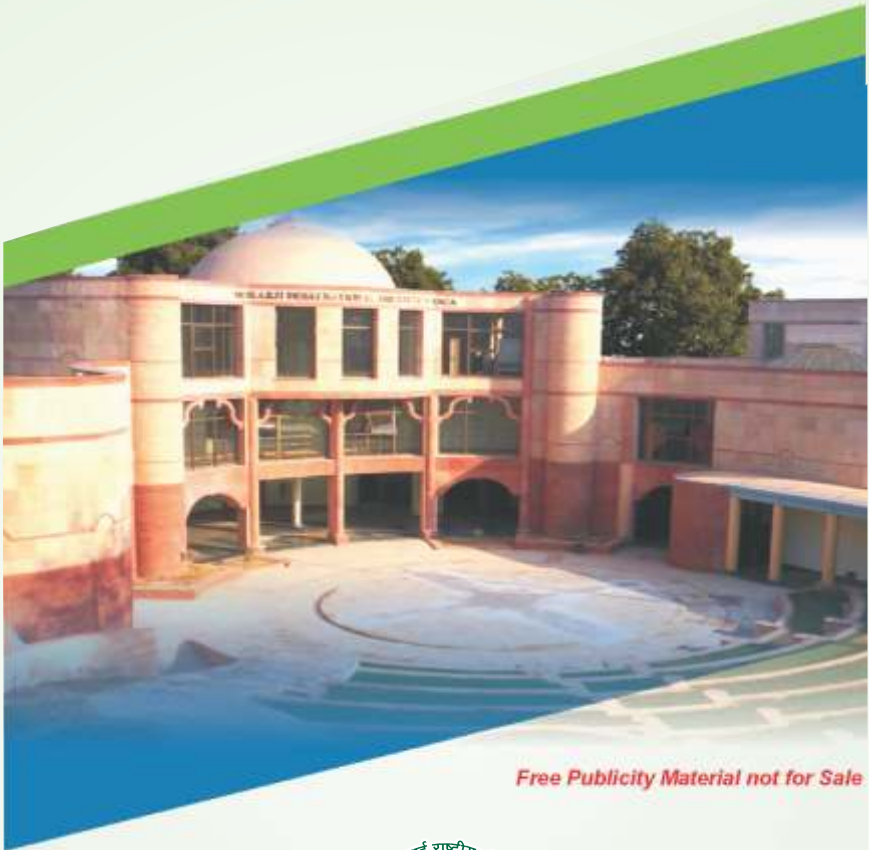
**Nadishodhana Pranayama**



**Bhramari**



**Meditation**



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