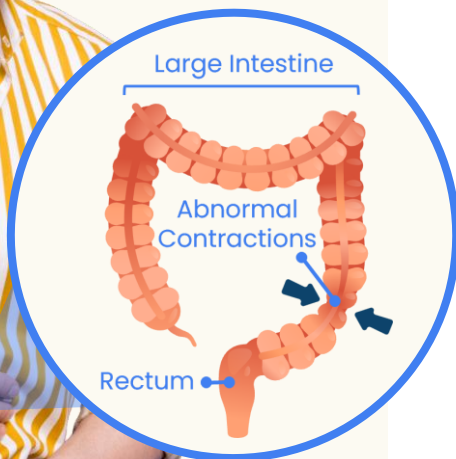




Clinical Check-In

Irritable Bowel Syndrome



Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a common digestive condition that affects how the gut functions. It's considered a functional gastrointestinal disorder, meaning symptoms occur without visible structural damage.

IBS can look different from person to person and may change over time.

Common Symptoms

Symptoms often come and go and may include:

- Abdominal pain or cramping
- Bloating or gas
- Diarrhea, constipation, or alternating between both
- Changes in stool appearance or frequency
- Relief of discomfort after a bowel movement

Stress, certain foods, hormonal changes, and routine disruptions can all influence symptoms.

Who's at Risk?

IBS can affect people of all ages and backgrounds, but certain factors are associated with a higher likelihood of experiencing symptoms.

People may be at increased risk if they:

- Have a personal or family history of digestive conditions

- › Experience ongoing or high levels of stress
- › Have a history of anxiety or depression
- › Have had a gastrointestinal infection in the past
- › Experience changes in routine, sleep, or eating patterns
- › Are sensitive to certain foods or dietary changes

IBS is more commonly diagnosed in women and often begins in early adulthood, though symptoms can develop at any stage of life.

When to Check In With a Provider

It's important to talk with a healthcare provider if you experience:

- › Ongoing digestive symptoms
- › Symptoms that interfere with daily life
- › New or worsening pain
- › Unexplained weight loss, bleeding, or symptoms at night

A provider can help rule out other conditions and discuss appropriate treatment options.

Questions to Ask Your Provider

If you're experiencing ongoing digestive symptoms, consider asking:

- › What type of IBS might I have?
- › Are there tests needed to rule out other conditions?
- › What dietary changes may help my symptoms?
- › How does stress affect IBS, and what support options are available?
- › What treatment options are appropriate for my symptoms?
- › When should I follow up or seek additional care?

These conversations can help guide care that fits your needs.

Digestive health is closely connected to stress and overall wellbeing. If symptoms are affecting your day-to-day life, support is available and you don't have to manage it alone.