

## IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME (IBS)

# What is Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)?

- ▶ Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a health issue found in your intestines (gut).
- ▶ IBS can cause symptoms such as:
  - Belly pain.
  - Cramping.
  - Gas.
  - Bloating (or swelling) of the belly.
  - Change in stool.
- ▶ There are different types of IBS, so each person may not have the same symptoms.
  - **IBS-D: IBS With Diarrhea**
    - You may often have loose stool.
    - You may often feel an urgent need to move your bowels.
    - You may often have cramps or belly pain.
  - **IBS-C: IBS With Constipation**
    - You may find it hard to move your bowels.
    - You may not often move your bowels.
    - You may have an urge to go but cannot go.



### Bowel Movements: What is Normal?

- The frequency of bowel movements among healthy people varies from three movements a day to three a week, but each person has a different normal bowel function.
- A bowel movement each day is not needed for every person.
- Stools should be formed but not hard, and they should have no blood.
- Stools should be passed without too much effort, straining or pain.



- **IBS-M: IBS Mixed**
  - You may have symptoms of both IBS-D and IBS-C.
- ▶ While the cause of IBS is unknown, it can still be treated.
- ▶ IBS is a common health issue, impacting more than 35 million Americans.
- ▶ IBS does not cause lasting harm to the bowels and does not lead to cancer.
- ▶ IBS can impact you physically, emotionally and socially.
- ▶ Most people with IBS are able to control their symptoms through diet, stress management and, sometimes, medication prescribed by their doctors.
- ▶ If you are having symptoms more than three times a month, for more than three months, talk your doctor.
  - Tell your doctor about all your symptoms to get the best treatment plan for you.

**Note:** IBS is not that same as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). More information on IBD, visit [www.gastro.org/patient-care](http://www.gastro.org/patient-care).

