

Irritable bowel syndrome in children



Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a long-term disorder that affects the large intestine or colon. While there is no cure for IBS, treatments can ease symptoms and help your child get back to normal daily function.

Diagnosis and treatment

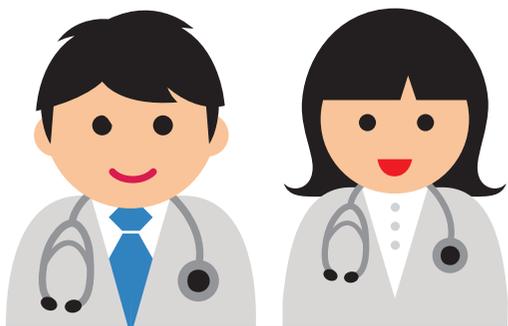
An IBS diagnosis means a child has **chronic abdominal discomfort with bowel movements (once per week for at least two months) and those symptoms are unrelated to another disease or injury.**

Your pediatrician will review your child's health history, conduct a physical exam and if necessary, order lab tests.

Treatment may include **dietary changes, stress management, over-the-counter medicines to help with diarrhea or constipation,** and in severe cases, **prescription medication.**

Ways to support your child

- **Avoid foods that are high in fiber, fat, dairy, caffeine or processed ingredients** — they can be hard to digest for some children.
- **Monitor what your child eats** and make a note of foods or drinks that set off their symptoms.
- **Talk with your child about ways to reduce their stress.** Try breathing exercises, yoga and mindfulness together during painful episodes.

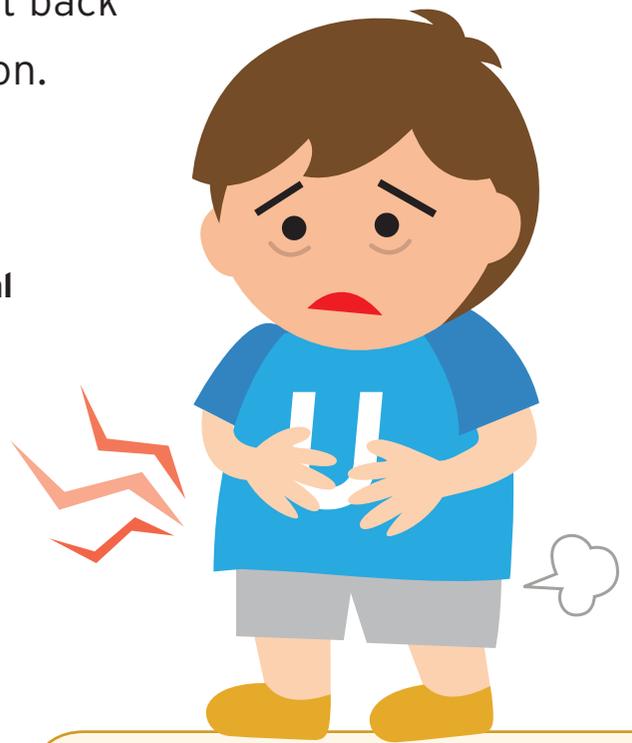


IBS affects up to **15%** of children and adolescents in the U.S.

How IBS can affect children

IBS symptoms can affect your child's ability to engage in daily activities and cause emotional challenges. Children with diarrhea may not get to the bathroom in time and face embarrassing incidents. As a result, they may dread going to school or stop playing with friends. Other children may start eating less to avoid pain with digestion; this may lead to weight loss.

If your child is struggling with IBS, talk with their doctor about ways to manage their symptoms and restore normal daily function.



Common symptoms

If the following symptoms occur continually, your child may have IBS:

- **Stomach pain and cramping**
- **Diarrhea and/or constipation**
- **Bloating and gas**
- **Upset stomach/nausea**
- **Urgent bowel movements**

To determine your child's condition and treatment needs, talk to your doctor.