

Top 4 Ways To Treat Irritable Bowel Syndrome

The most common treatments for irritable bowel syndrome are fiber supplements and laxatives. Sufferers often find themselves caught in one of two extremes, loose bowels or constipation. These over the counter remedies are often used for years before a person is diagnosed with the disease. So, the most common form of treatment for irritable bowel syndrome is to treat the appropriate symptom. However, even those with loose bowels are encouraged to take fiber supplements or increase their dietary fiber because the pendulum often swings from one extreme to the other. The second most common treatment, recommended for all sufferers of irritable bowel syndrome, is lifestyle adjustments. Doctors believe that many lifestyle issues contribute to the development and symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome. They recommend these lifestyle issues be adjusted to help prevent continuing problems with the disease. People suffering from irritable bowel syndrome should seek counseling or other methods to reduce their stress levels. They should exercise regularly, particularly through walking, and should be certain to maintain proper hydration and nutrition, drinking at least 64 ounces of water a day. Some foods can further irritate the digestive tract, causing additional problems, and diarrhea can lead to dehydration. Proper hydration can also help treat irritable bowel syndrome by minimizing constipation. Doctors often recommend sufferers maintain a food diary to be able to easily track which foods or types of foods increase their symptoms. Patients suffering from irritable bowel syndrome are often told to avoid carbonated beverages and raw fruits and vegetables which can contribute to gas and bloating. Caffeine should also be avoided due to its dehydrating effects. In addition to those lifestyle changes, doctors often treat irritable bowel syndrome with three different medications. Sufferers are usually first given an antispasmodic to prevent colon spasms and the associated pain. Oral antispasmodics are designed to prevent cramping and reduce the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome. Colon spasms not only create pain for the person with irritable bowel syndrome, but also upset the balance of the digestive tract and can lead to additional health issues. The second prescription medication often given to treat irritable bowel syndrome is some form of antidepressant. The antidepressants often help the sufferer to relax and therefore minimize the symptoms. Finally, the third medication often prescribed to treat irritable bowel syndrome is mild muscle relaxants. These are usually prescribed because both antispasmodics and antidepressants can cause dehydration, leading to more constipation problems. Researchers are developing combination medications to treat irritable bowel syndrome symptoms, but they have yet to determine the cause of the syndrome. Without knowing the cause, doctors can only treat the obvious symptoms and the lifestyle issues which tend to go hand in hand with the disease.

About the Author

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