

Telephone Directory

Employee Health Benefits  
(941) 748-4501 ext 6403

Member Advocacy  
(941) 748-4501 ext 6407,  
ext 6409, and ext 6411

Lifestyle Assistance and  
Modification Program (LAMP)  
(941)741-2995

Diabetes Program  
(941) 748-4501 ext 6410

Nutrition Program  
(941) 748-4501 ext 6464

Communications Coordinator  
(941)748-4501 ext 3967

Fitness/Exercise Programs  
(941)748-4501 ext 3979

Pharmacy Advocate  
(941) 748-4501 ext 6406

Optum Rx  
(800) 562-6223

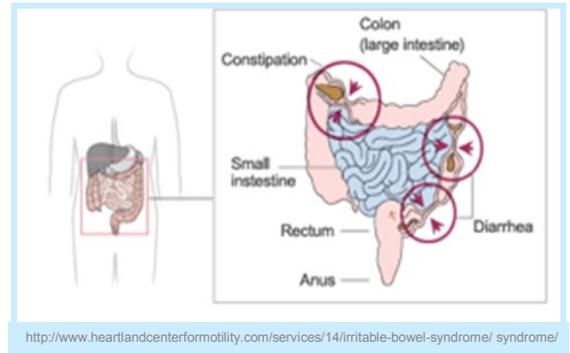
Precertification  
(941) 741-2963

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www.ManateeYourChoice.com

**Irritable Bowel Syndrome Awareness Month**

What is Irritable Bowel Syndrome?

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a disorder of the small and large intestines affecting 10 to 15 percent of adults. Women and younger adults are more likely to be affected. In IBS the structure of the intestines is normal but the function is not. The cause of IBS is not known. Multiple factors are thought to be involved including problems with nerve signals between the brain and the intestines, altered speed of intestinal movement, and intestinal nerves that are extra sensitive to pain may contribute to IBS.



Symptoms

IBS is long lasting, but symptoms come and go. Symptoms often occur soon after eating a meal. Abdominal pain and changes in bowel habits are the most common symptoms of IBS. The pain may feel like cramping and may improve after a bowel movement. Bowel movements may be more or less often, and the appearance of stools may change. Diarrhea is described as frequent loose stools. Constipation features hard, pellet-like stools. People with IBS are classified by which type of stool is most common. They may have mostly diarrhea, mostly constipation, or a mix of both.

Occasional diarrhea or constipation is normal. IBS is defined by frequent diarrhea or constipation associated with abdominal pain. Other symptoms include bloating and feeling that they haven't finished a bowel movement.

Diagnosis

IBS is frequently the problem if you experience stomach pain or discomfort with a change in bowel habits for at least 3 months. It is important to first rule out other causes of diarrhea or constipation. These could be:

- Not eating enough food with fiber
- Allergy to gluten (wheat, rye, barley)
- Not drinking enough water

| Types of IBS   |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| IBS with diarrhea  | IBS with constipation   | Mixed IBS  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Hard or lumpy stools for &lt;25% of bowel movements</li> <li>◆ Mushy or watery stool</li> <li>◆ ≥ 25% of bowel movements</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Hard or lumpy stools for ≥ 25% of bowel movements</li> <li>◆ Mushy or watery stools for &lt; 25% of bowel movements</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Hard or lumpy stools for ≥ 25% of bowel movements</li> <li>◆ Mushy or watery stools for ≥ 25% of bowel movements</li> </ul> |

There are different tests used to identify the three types of IBS. Having blood work done is common for all types. If diarrhea is the main symptom, a doctor might collect a sample of stool for testing, test for a gluten allergy, or test for colon cancer. If constipation is the main symptom, a doctor might take X-rays or test for colon cancer. The doctor might do all of these tests if diarrhea and constipation are both symptoms.

## Treatment

The main goal of treatment for IBS is to improve stomach discomfort, bloating and abnormal bowel habits. Several lifestyle changes can improve symptoms. Exercise and avoiding caffeine, alcohol and foods that make IBS worse is one way to do this. Foods that make IBS worse are those that are high in fat or sugar or made mostly of dairy. In severe cases of IBS, behavioral counseling may help.



### IBS with **constipation**:

1. First try soluble fiber- Metamucil
2. If this fails, then try osmotic laxative- Milk of magnesia
3. If this fails, prescription medication may be necessary

### IBS with **diarrhea**:

1. First try loperamide- Imodium
2. If this fails, prescription medication may be necessary

Medication can ease symptoms of IBS but nothing can cure the condition. The best thing to do is work with a doctor until you find a treatment method that work best for you.

Here are five important tips to follow if a doctor tells you that you have IBS:

1. Maintain a normal and healthy sleep pattern.
2. Keep up with exercise 3-5 days a week.
3. Follow the treatment plan strictly.
4. Avoid foods and fluids that worsen symptoms.
5. Keep a diary of daily activities, foods, and how you feel to review with a doctor regularly.

## New Generic Medications

| Brand Name | Generic Name   | Indication  |
|------------|----------------|---|
| Tamiflu    | Oseltamivir    | This is given to either prevent or treat the influenza virus aka the flu. |
| Azilect    | Rasagiline     | One of the medications used in Parkinson disease.                         |
| Pristiq    | Desvenlafaxine | Used in the treatment of major depressive disorder.                       |



Manatee County Government's Center for Health & Lifestyle Management \* [www.ManateeYourChoice.com](http://www.ManateeYourChoice.com)

### Manatee Health Disclaimer

The information in this newsletter is not a substitute for medical advice. It is for reference only and should not be used to determine treatment for your specific medical conditions-only a health care provider can do this. You should seek prompt medical care for any specific health issues and consult your physician regarding the use of over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or consult your physician regarding the use of prescription or over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or before starting any new diet, fitness, or supplement regimen.

Prescription Benefit Manager:  
Optum Rx  
For: Manatee YourChoice Health Plan  
Bradenton, Florida

Prepared by:  
Pharmacy Healthcare Solutions, Inc.  
P.O. Box 101632  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Editor: Melissa Sherer Krause, Pharm.D.  
**Contributors:** Christopher K. Williams, Pharm.D.,  
A. Ruck, A. Harris, B. Cauley, Pharm. D.Candidates.  
Designer: Linda Richardson