

Understanding IBS

IBS or Irritable Bowel Syndrome

is a common gastrointestinal disorder. While it is not life-threatening, symptoms are often bothersome, embarrassing and debilitating. Those affected may experience abdominal pain, irregular bowel patterns and a host of other symptoms, including:



The cause of IBS is unknown but it may be triggered by:



- Gas
- Constipation
- Diarrhea



- Bloating
- Nausea



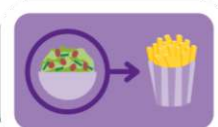
- Abdominal Pain
- Stools with mucus



Infection



Food Poisoning



Change in Diet



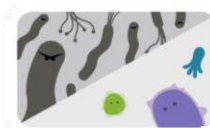
Medications



Surgery



Being Female



Bacterial or Hormonal Imbalances



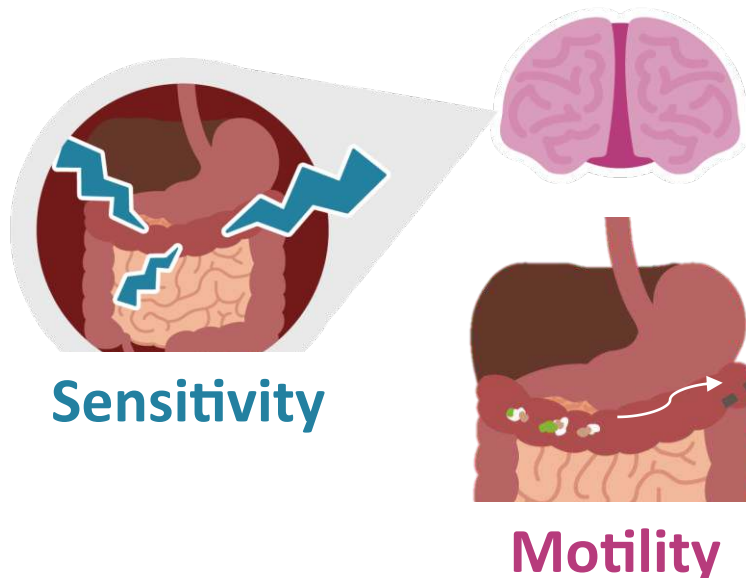
Neurotransmitter Imbalances



Travel

Living Positively with IBS

Understanding is the first step to living positively with this syndrome. IBS affects how contents move through the bowel (**motility**), and how the brain interprets sensations that occur along the digestive tract (**sensitivity**).



Fast Facts About IBS

- Canada has one of the highest rates of IBS in the world. Over 5 million Canadians are living with the syndrome with an additional 120,000 developing the syndrome each year.
- IBS has similar or more severe impacts on a person's daily schedule as other chronic illnesses such as arthritis, asthma or coronary artery disease.
- Approximately \$8 billion of lost productivity is attributed to IBS in Canada each year.
- IBS costs the health care system in excess of \$6.5 billion annually.
- IBS affects more women than men.

