

Understanding IBS Abdominal Pain & Cramping

WHAT IBS ABDOMINAL PAIN FEELS LIKE



Cramping



Aching or
gnawing
pain



Sharp or
stabbing
sensations



Pain linked
to bowel
movements



Pain with
bloating

WHY IBS CAUSES PAIN

1. Visceral Hypersensitivity (Sensitive Gut Nerves)

The nerves in the digestive tract are extra sensitive, so stretch from gas or stool can feel painful.



2. Altered Motility (How the Gut Moves)

Contractions can cause stretching, gas build-up, or urgent, painful bowel movements.



3. Microbiome changes

May lead to distension, excess gas production, abdominal pain, and altered bowel habits.



4. Immune, Histamine, and Mast Cell Activity

Mast cells can increase sensitivity and contribute to changes in motility and pain.



5. Overlapping Conditions

IBS coexists with conditions such as pelvic floor dysfunction, connective tissue disorders, and endometriosis.



WHERE DOES IBS PAIN SHOW UP?

Left lower side

"All over" the abdomen

Lower abdomen (around
or below the belly button)

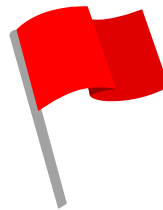
Right lower side
(overlaps with other
conditions, so new or
severe symptoms
should be assessed
by your healthcare
provider)

IBS PAIN (Ongoing for 3 months or longer)

- Fluctuates
- Linked to bowel movements, meals, or stress
- Improves after passing stool or gas

VS

RED FLAG



- Unintentional weight loss
- Blood in the stool
- Persistent vomiting
- New, severe, or worsening pain
- Fever or chills
- Sudden change in bowel habits

COMMON ACTIVATORS FOR IBS ABDOMINAL PAIN

Food (FODMAP)



Bowel Habits



Gut-Brain and Hormonal Signals



CONSIDERATIONS TO REDUCE ABDOMINAL PAIN

1 Addressing The Gut Side

- Dietary modification
- Managing altered bowel habits
- Medications and supplements

2 Addressing the gut-brain connection

- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Gut-directed hypnotherapy
- Mindfulness and nervous system regulation

3 Ways to Support the Pain

- Tracking Patterns
- Physical Comfort Measures
- Planning Around Flares