

## MAKING SENSE OF IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROM (IBS)

*StoneTree Naturopathic Clinic, Collingwood, ON*

Irritable Bowel Syndrome, or IBS, affects up to one in five North Americans, but for all its prevalence, it's tricky to diagnose.

There's no test or examination that can confirm IBS—it's often a "diagnosis of exclusion". When all diseases are ruled out that would explain your funny bowels, your bloating, your pain and your gas, you've got IBS.

That's problematic for conventional care, which specializes in treating disease. When there is no disease, the typical approach is to manage symptoms. For some, that's not enough.

The root cause of IBS is usually a functional problem. That means something in your digestion isn't working quite right or is out of balance, including:

1. *Your immune system.* Our "guts" have a powerful immune system to protect us from food-borne infections, and 'play nice' with the food we eat. Imbalances can lead to food intolerance. Unlike a food allergy, a food intolerance won't show up on conventional allergy tests.
2. *Your gut flora.* There 200-300 different kinds of "bugs" in your digestive system. Imbalances from toxicity, past infections, and antibiotics can all cause problems.
3. *Your enzymes.* Your guts are responsible for digesting the majority of your food. Chronic stress and toxicity can affect proper functioning of your digestive juices.
4. *Your neurotransmitters.* There are more receptors in your gut for serotonin than any other place in your body. Imbalances in your stress responses or in the ability of your nerves to fire properly in your gut can be a root cause of trouble.

IBS is no fun. If you've suffered from it, you'll know that finding the root cause can be worth the effort.

*To learn more about naturopathic solutions for IBS, book a complimentary 15-minute visit with a naturopathic doctor in our Collingwood, ON clinic by calling 705-444-5331, or emailing us at [feelbetter@stonetreeclinic.com](mailto:feelbetter@stonetreeclinic.com)*  
[www.StoneTreeClinic.com](http://www.StoneTreeClinic.com)