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Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is part of a spectrum of diseases known as Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders which include diseases such as noncardiac chest pain, nonulcer dyspepsia, and chronic constipation or diarrhea. These diseases are all characterized by chronic or recurrent gastrointestinal symptoms for which no structural or biochemical cause can be found.

The most common symptoms that IBS patients complain of are: frequent diarrhea, abdominal pain (usually in the lower abdomen area), gas, bloating, diarrhea alternating with constipation, mucus in the stool, bowel urgency or incontinence, and a feeling of incomplete evacuation after a bowel movement. Since IBS is considered mainly to be a disorder of the lower gastrointestinal tract, the symptoms tend to remain located below the navel.

However, several symptoms of the upper gastrointestinal tract have also been shown to be common in those with IBS, including: difficulty swallowing, a sensation of a lump in the throat or a closing of the throat, heartburn or acid indigestion, nausea (with or without vomiting), and chest pain.

Medication: Most people who suffer from IBS prefer to get medications for ibs treatment. A number of different medications are used to help. These are:

- * antispasmodic medicines, which help to reduce abdominal pain and cramping
- * laxatives, which help to treat the symptoms of constipation
- * antimotility medicines, which help to treat the symptoms of diarrhoea
- * antidepressants, which were originally designed to treat depression but can also reduce abdominal pain and cramping

Probiotics:

These are dietary supplements that product manufacturers claim can help improve digestive health. They contain so-called 'friendly bacteria' that supposedly destroy 'bad bacteria', helping to keep your gut and digestive system healthy.

Some people find that taking probiotics regularly can help to relieve the symptoms of IBS. However, there is no scientific evidence to prove that probiotics work and have beneficial health effects. If you decide to try probiotics, make sure that you follow the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations regarding dosage.

Apart from medication and supplements, reducing the amount of stress in your life may help to reduce the frequency and severity of your IBS symptoms. Meditation, yoga or Tai Chi and regular exercise can help in relieving stress and thereby, help to reduce the symptoms of IBS.

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