

Choice

Health & Wellbeing

Comfy
Spa Training

A Brand You Can Trust!

www.comfyspatraining.co.uk



www.choicehealthmag.com

The Leading Publication for Complementary Health, Education and Wellbeing

The value of Aromatherapy

for those physically
challenged

In this issue:

Want more customers?

20



How does Reiki work?

29



Wrap up your clients

50



**Your Health and
Wellbeing Success
Starts Here!**

Are you a health-conscious consumer, looking to come into the industry or looking for a suitable treatment? Find out what the experts say and read.

Ayurvedic approach to irritable bowel syndrome



Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common digestive disorder characterized by altered bowel movements coupled with varying degrees of abdominal pain and discomfort. The actual cause is still much of a mystery in allopathic medicine. However, Ayurveda looks at the root cause as well as the process of any 'disease'. This requires an holistic approach to the management, prevention and treatment for IBS and other conditions.

Ayurveda advocates that the root cause of all conditions manifests from a disturbance to the process of digestion. This leads to the accumulation of ama (toxins), ultimately creating various diseases. Great attention is given to the strength of the digestive process in Ayurveda which can become hampered by inappropriate lifestyle and dietary habits.

The fundamental approach to ayurvedic treatment begins by assessing which dosha (vata, pitta, kapha) has become imbalanced in the individual and corrective measures are taken to regain alignment with the individual's natural constitution. Vata, pitta and kapha all play a vital supportive role in the digestive process where the imbalance begins. When this is understood, corrective herbs and diet can be advised.

IBS can be triggered by stress (although not a direct cause) and often occurs as a result of an infection. Incorrect diet (according to the doshas), irregular eating habits, consumption of incompatible foods, excessive eating, as well as suppression of natural urges can cause disruption

to the digestion. There is usually a disruption to the way the gut, nervous system and brain interact in the manifestation of IBS.

Signs and symptoms

IBS symptoms vary from individual to individual and can vary from a mild disturbance to severe debilitation. Affecting twice as many women as men, IBS can be diagnosed if the symptoms go on for more than three months. Common symptoms include:

- 🕒 Abdominal pain (mainly lower)
- 🕒 Bloating and flatulence
- 🕒 Fullness and/or urge to defecate after meals
- 🕒 Intermittent diarrhoea and/or constipation
- 🕒 Feeling of incomplete bowel movement
- 🕒 Passing of mucous with/without stools
- 🕒 Feeling of urgency to evacuate

IBS is a common condition that can lead to pressures in other areas of one's life be it physical, emotional, financial and social, yet few people seek help. Maybe due to embarrassment or maybe it is not 'that big a problem' to seek

help, if the condition goes on unresolved it can lead to further complications such as fibromyalgia, Crohn's disease, genitourinary symptoms, headaches, back aches, anxiety and depression.

There are lots of early signs leading up to the manifestation of IBS. These can include, sluggish digestion, hyperacidity, bad taste in the mouth, anorexia, increased thirst, gastric reflux, abdominal gurgling, change in energy levels, fainting feeling, headaches.

Patients can be left feeling isolated, triggering to more emotional stress and creating a vicious cycle. Many tests can be performed to rule out dietary intolerances before a conclusion is made towards IBS and stool samples can identify any infective causative factors.

When the digestive fire is low, this can lead to undigested food material (ama) being formed in the gut (either overcooked or undercooked) that is not assimilated and these toxins can start to circulate, lodge in the body or release into the bowel and create disturbed evacuation.

Diet and lifestyle management

Dietary advice will vary from person to person and will be based on the dominant dosha involvement and current dietary habits. However, as a general rule:

Primarily in Ayurveda, it is advised to maintain a healthy digestive agni (fire) and maintain healthy eating habits according to ayurvedic daily regimen (dinacharya):

- 🕒 Follow dietary guidelines according to dosha type
- 🕒 Keep meals timely and regular

- ☯ Avoiding heavy, cold, fatty, too rough and contaminated foods
- ☯ Keep meals at a digestible portion size – usually a meal should be no more in quantity than our cupped hands
- ☯ Leave a clear 3-4 hours between meals so that the previous meal is fully digested and therefore avoiding accumulation of toxins
- ☯ Adapt diet according to the seasonal changes
- ☯ Avoid fasting followed by heavy meals. If agni is disturbed then even light and healthy foods can become difficult to digest and can create toxins.
- ☯ Eat slowly and mindfully in a calm and relaxed environment. Focus your attention on the food and avoid watching TV, talking, reading or engaging the mind in anything but the process of eating. Allow the senses to be stimulated by taste, smell and texture the food
- ☯ Give gratitude for your food at the beginning of each meal.

Dietary adjustments alone are not enough to avoid and relieve IBS. Lifestyle changes should be given careful consideration to achieve full balance with a holistic approach that Ayurveda strongly advocates:

- ☯ Regular and light daily exercise – even walking will keep the body in circulation
- ☯ Avoid suppression of natural urges of urine and stools
- ☯ Maintain regular and adequate sleep patterns
- ☯ Take time for relaxation & meditation.

Pranayama breathing exercises can stimulate digestion and keep the mind calm - nadi shodhana (alternate nostril breathing)

- ☯ Regular ayurvedic head and body abhyanga (massage)
- ☯ Specific yoga postures can be advised by a qualified yoga instructor. Postures such as forward bends, half spinal twists, sun salutation

and crocodile pose can all be beneficial.

Principles of ayurvedic treatment for IBS

Since the most prevalent symptoms are either constipation based or diarrhoea based the treatment plan would vary accordingly as well as a dietary and herbal plan for each person based on the dominant dosha involved.

The first stage of the treatment process would be to remove/digest toxins (ama pachana) by doing laghana (reduction therapy). Hot liquid fasting is an effective way to achieve this. When there is no food to digest, the body starts to digest the ama, helping to reduce circulating toxins and formation of new toxins. Then the digestive fire needs stimulating with heating herbs such as trikatu (three pungent spices including black pepper, long pepper and dried ginger). The focus is then turned to the correction of the imbalanced doshas – vata, pitta or kapha.

Purgation (virechana) and enemas (basti) are recommended as purification treatment. A practitioner should be consulted for panchakarma treatment as well as tailored herbal remedies for IBS. Digestion can be improved by taking buttermilk with digestive spices such as hinguwastak, or cumin and rick salt or ginger and liquorice. A light diet of kitchari and lightly cooked vegetable with ghee and spices is the most conducive diet for IBS patients. While Bael fruit (Aegle Marmelos), curcumin (the active ingredient of turmeric) and triphala capsules are very useful herbs in IBS.

Constipation-dominant IBS

- ☯ Take a glass of slightly warmed prune juice with 1tsp ground rock salt helping to break down hard stools
- ☯ For bloating you can take hinguwastak – the main ingredient is asafetida with is renowned for its anti-flatulent properties
- ☯ Meals can be more moist in nature
- ☯ Take pomegranate juice with meals

- ☯ Buttermilk in between meals with spices
- ☯ Opt for psyllium husks to stimulate movement in the short term.
- ☯ Spices that stimulate digestive activity include, ginger, fennel, cumin, cardamom
- ☯ Haritaki (present in triphala) is the main ingredient to clear vata from the bowels and excellent in constipation and clearing toxins from the bowels
- ☯ Shatavari, ashwagandha, sesame oil, ghee, mung all pacify vata
- ☯ Opt for sweet sour and salty tastes to stimulate down ward flow

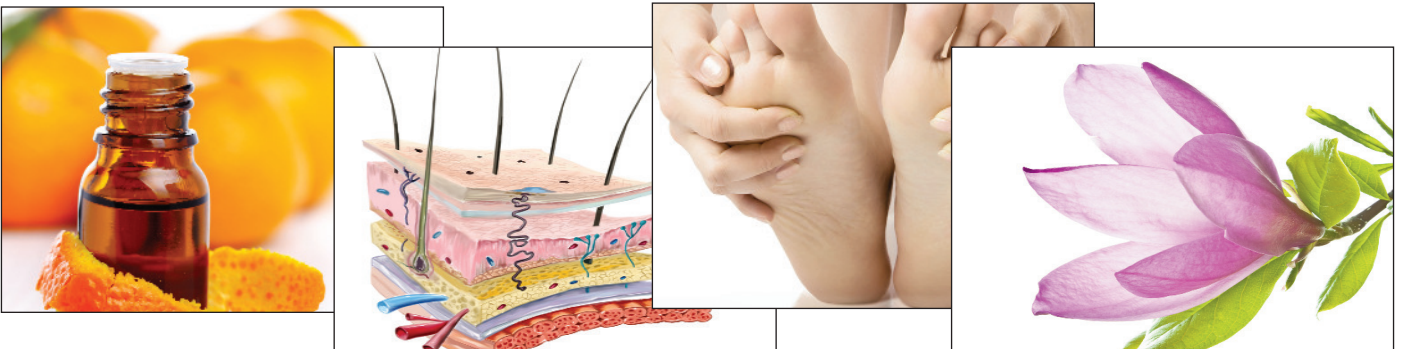
Diarrhoea-dominant IBS

- ☯ Buttermilk in between meals with spices
- ☯ Amalaki is a rejuvenating tonic (present in triphala) and useful for pacifying pitta conditions
- ☯ Coriander (fresh & seeds) are cooling and digestive
- ☯ Aloe vera, guduchi, shatavari, neem, curcumin (turmeric) musta, kutaja are all great for balancing pitta

Paying careful attention to conducive eating habits and lifestyle can not only reduce digestive disturbances but help to avoid all other diseases too. Ayurvedic approaches to IBS are both preventative and curative. Consult your nearest ayurvedic doctor for a tailored programme to overcome this condition. **CHW**

© Geeta Vara is a fully qualified ayurvedic practitioner and member of the APA, working in Central SW London providing personalised consultations, health coaching, bespoke treatments and corporate and small group workshops. For more information about ayurvedic digestive health or other health concerns, please visit: www.geetavara.co.uk

Therapy Prints, Therapy Wall Décor



Transform your walls with these great quality therapy posters and prints in various sizes A4 to A0. High quality poster paper, budget, silk, matt and glossy options available. Why not have them laminated? We can also do canvas wraps. 100s of designs and options available, or custom create your own! Check out our website for more details www.choicehealthmag.com/wallddecor