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# IBS & THE GUT

WHITEPAPER



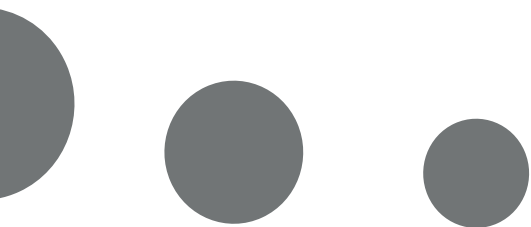
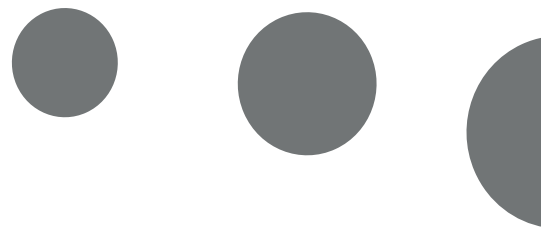
## IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common condition of the digestive system. IBS has a number of symptoms which also have close resemblances with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), such as the characteristic chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract, stomach pain, bloating, diarrhoea and constipation. Despite this, IBS inflammation is characterised at a lower level than IBD. What exactly triggers the development of this condition is not currently known but genetics (family history of the disease) is likely to be involved together with other factors, like stress for instance. For example; a significant stressful event like losing a loved one has been linked to the triggering of IBS.

Although IBS and IBD still tend to be considered as separate conditions, accumulating research indicates that IBD is initiated by IBS. Many IBD patients often have a history of IBS<sup>(121)</sup>.

As with IBD, dysbiosis (an imbalance in the gut microbial community) is a significant characteristic of IBS. Patients with IBS have changes in microbiota with the notable reduction of bacterial diversity, a feature usually associated with the unhealthy gut. More detailed studies suggest that in the case of IBS there is a relative increase in proinflammatory species of *Enterobacteriaceae* family over beneficial bacteria – *Lactobacillus*, *Bifidobacterium* and some others<sup>(122, 123)</sup>. Other observations indicate reductions in the number of butyrate-producing bacteria in IBS patients<sup>(124)</sup>. Butyrate, one of the SCFAs produced by the healthy microbiota, regulates inflammation and improves the protective function of the gut wall. Therefore, targeting the microbiome in IBS as well as IBD could be an effective therapeutic approach to relieve and cure these conditions.





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