

Title:

Enteric-coated peppermint oil improves abdominal pain and discomfort in patients with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)

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Peppermint oil, irritable bowel syndrome, ibs, abdominal pain, abdominal discomfort

Abstract:

Enteric-coated peppermint oil is a safe and effective agent for relieving abdominal pain and discomfort, and for improving some aspects of quality of life in patients with IBS. Adverse effects are generally mild, transient, and well-tolerated, the most frequently reported symptoms being heartburn, headache, and dizziness.

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## Peppermint oil for abdominal pain

*Studies have shown that peppermint oil taken three times a day significantly relieves IBS-related abdominal pain compared to placebo.\**

### How does it work?

The main component of peppermint oil, menthol, helps to relax the smooth muscle of the intestine. This “antispasmodic” action is believed to improve abdominal pain.

### Why peppermint oil?

- Peppermint oil is inexpensive and available over the counter
- Peppermint oil is safe and well-tolerated. Potential side effects are heartburn, headache, and dizziness.

\*Peppermint oil has not been shown to improve constipation or diarrhea. Please talk to your doctor about your symptoms.

*For more information on irritable bowel syndrome, please visit:*

International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders  
[www.iffgd.org](http://www.iffgd.org)

National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse (NDDIC)  
[www.digestive.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.digestive.niddk.nih.gov)

*For more information on peppermint oil*

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)  
<http://nccam.nih.gov/>

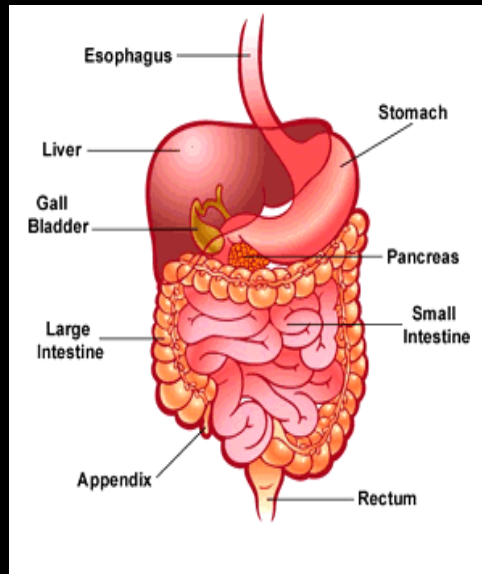
## Relieving Abdominal Pain in Irritable Bowel Syndrome



# Irritable Bowel Syndrome

## Overview

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## Causes

People with IBS have irregular patterns of intestinal motility, or movement. It is not clear why patients develop IBS, but these are some possibilities:

- Nerves or muscles in the digestive tract may be particularly sensitive to emotional stress and certain foods
- Hormonal changes may cause IBS
- IBS may be triggered by an infection

## Diagnosis

Your doctor may recommend numerous tests to rule out other disorders of the intestinal tract.

These tests may include:

- Lactose intolerance test
- Blood test
- Colonoscopy
- CT scan



## Treatment

No single type of treatment works best for everyone, so you and your doctor will need to work together to create a treatment plan that will meet your needs. Here are some treatments your doctor may recommend:

- Keep a food diary, and avoid foods that appear to trigger or worsen symptoms
- Fiber and fluids can help relieve constipation
- Peppermint oil can help relieve abdominal pain
- Medications
- Stress relief
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