

# Keeping a food diary when you have symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)

Pelvic Floor Conservative Management

Produced: June 2022

Review: June 2025

Information for Patients

Leaflet number: 1309 Version: 1

## Introduction

Some people find that they have symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) when eating certain foods.

- Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common condition that affects the digestive system.
- It causes symptoms like stomach cramps, bloating, diarrhoea and constipation. These tend to come and go over time, and can last for days, weeks or months at a time.
- It's usually a lifelong problem. It can be very frustrating to live with and can have a big impact on your everyday life.
- There's no cure, but diet changes and medicines can often help control the symptoms.

The exact cause is unknown – it has been linked to things like food passing through your gut too quickly or too slowly, oversensitive nerves in your gut, stress and a family history of IBS.

Keeping a food diary so that you can compare your symptoms with what has been eaten can be useful to find the foods that trigger symptoms.

Trigger foods can cause symptoms straight away or within 48 hours.

Looking at patterns of food groups may help you to identify and foods that make symptoms worse.

Please do not cut out any food groups without speaking to a health care provider or dietician.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

## Diary Week

Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks/Fluid	Poo Type/ Symptoms
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

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## Types of poo (stool)








Having a normal poo type is important. It will help you to empty completely and should be easy to pass.

A normal stool type is considered to be a 3 or 4 on the Bristol poo (Stool) Scale.

Hard poos (type 1 or 2) tend to be linked to constipation.

Soft poos (type 5, 6 or 7) can make emptying the bowel more difficult and often cause the feeling of incomplete emptying. Softer poos may make it difficult to wipe clean and are more commonly linked with faecal incontinence.

## Bristol Stool Chart

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces. Entirely Liquid

## Dietician Service

Lots of information can be found here [www.lnds.nhs.uk](http://www.lnds.nhs.uk). If you feel you need more help, your GP could refer you to the Dietician Service

## Contact details

For any urgent advice please speak to your GP or NHS 111

Pelvic Floor Colorectal Conservative Management Service:

08:00am to 4:00pm Monday to Friday. Telephone messages will be taken off the answering machine in between clinics.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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