



Dear challengers,

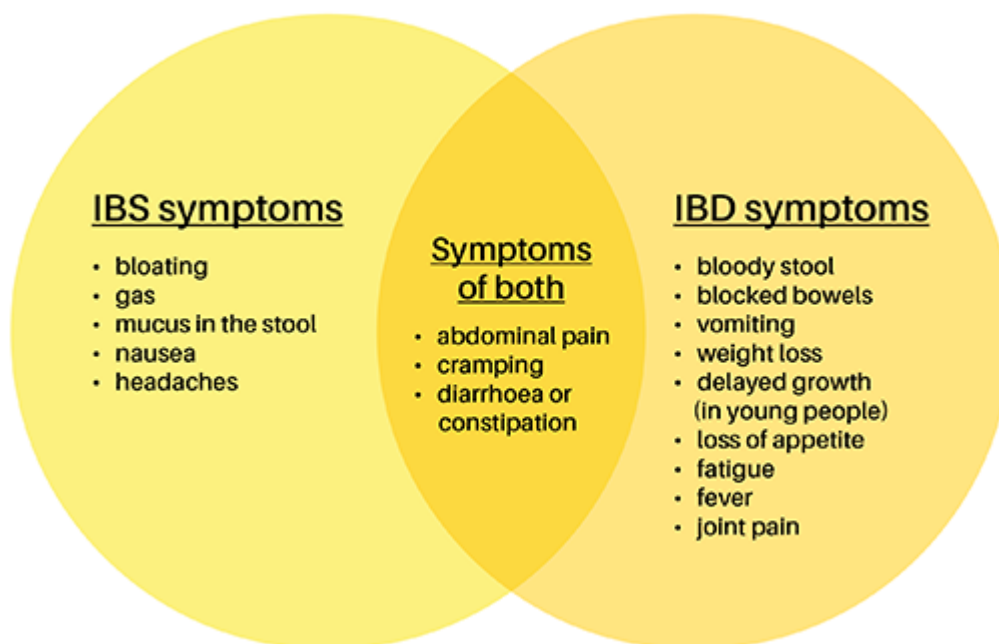
We're in the second week of *Supercharge your gut* month! This week, we explore some common gut-related issues and offer tips to help manage them.

A case of the irritable bowels

Symptoms of gut issues can range from poor sleep, low energy levels, changes in appetite and, of course, bloating, gas, constipation, diarrhoea and the like. Two common causes of gut problems are irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). But what exactly are they?

IBS is a disorder of the gastrointestinal tract, i.e. the stomach and intestines, that affects up to 30% of Australians. While the exact cause is unclear, common triggers include stress, diet and not chewing food properly. IBD, on the other hand, is inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract, and refers to two conditions: Crohn's and ulcerative colitis. Cases of IBD have been rising in recent years, and while the actual cause comes down to a mix of genetic and environmental factors, experts are researching how what we eat may play a role.

While symptoms of both are often similar, there is one main difference between them: IBS is triggered by environmental factors, whereas IBD is an autoimmune disease.



Lifestyle changes can help manage symptoms, and include:

- adding more fibre to your diet
- regular exercise
- practising mindful eating
- limiting stress
- following an elimination diet to pinpoint the causes of digestive distress.

A low-FODMAP diet is a common example of an elimination diet.
Read our article for more on IBS and IBD.

Of course, other underlying factors may be at play, such as an intolerance to lactose, gluten or even Coeliac disease, so a visit to your doctor is recommended if symptoms occur frequently.

Your poop says a lot

Our stools can give us great insight into the health of our gut and the inner workings of our digestive system. They can tell us if we're drinking enough water, eating enough fibre and how well our bodies are absorbing the nutrients from the foods we eat. We've created a guide to help you navigate your body's natural waste system.



Your challenge this week...

✓ Fruit and vegetables

This week, we want you to amp up your fruit and veggie intake. Key to boosting your gut microbiome, fruit and vegetables contain polyphenols, oligosaccharides and fibre, all of which help increase good bacteria and reduce your risk of chronic disease.

Here are some tips to get you started:

- 🥬 Add veggies to your fruit smoothie, e.g. spinach or kale
- 🥦 Cook up a veggie stir-fry using a frozen veggie mix
- 🍲 Make a nourishing vegetable soup
- 🍏 Add sliced apple or pear to your salads.

Recipes to inspire you:

- [Lentil and vegetable soup](#)
- [Apple pie overnight oats](#)
- [Chocolate indulgence lava cake \(with hidden veggies\)](#).

Don't forget to use [our guide](#) from week one to help you keep track.

This week's mini challenge...

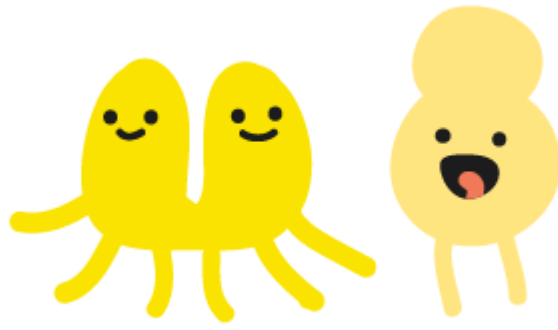
✓ Keep a food and symptoms diary

A food and symptoms diary is an effective tool to help you pinpoint food triggers or intolerances. It allows you to monitor your symptoms, mood and energy levels, and can uncover patterns in your eating habits.



Good gut guys

Let's not forget this week's good gut guys: ***Streptococcus thermophilus*** and ***Enterococcus faecium***. Our buddy Strep is a type of lactic acid bacteria that helps us break down lactose, while Enter is a probiotic bacteria that helps ward off harmful pathogens.



Coming up...

Next week, we explore gut-loving prebiotics, probiotics and fermented foods, and our resident dietitian Steph teaches us how to make delicious sweet prebiotic breakfast cups.

Speak soon Superchargers,

Team CBHS Health

Sources:

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