

DO YOU HAVE THE #1 MISDIAGNOSED INTESTINAL DISORDER? Millions do and don't know it!

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By Peter R. Berlin

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The bad news is: if you have intestinal problems and have been diagnosed with IBS (irritable bowel syndrome) Crohn's disease, spastic colon or the catch all "chronic digestive disorder," you may be treating the wrong problem.

The good news is: you may have undiagnosed celiac disease and if you do relief is just a change of diet away.

According to the National Institute of Health, it is estimated over three million Americans have undiagnosed celiac disease and on average it takes 11 years to get a proper diagnosis. That's 11 years of needless suffering from symptoms such as diarrhea, abdominal pain, gas, bloating, and weight loss. And many patients don't experience those signs, instead reporting so-called atypical symptoms, including a blistering, itchy skin rash, anemia, short stature, delayed puberty, infertility and tooth enamel defects. Because of its broad range of symptoms that may be readily associated with another condition or ailment, celiac can be difficult to diagnose. Another factor why doctor's miss the diagnosis is that many doctors are not knowledgeable about celiac disease.

The disease is a genetic autoimmune disorder also known as gluten-intolerance. Gluten is found in wheat, rye and barley and its derivatives, so foods and ingredients to be avoided include such staples as most flours, bread and pasta.

If a personal with the disorder continues to eat gluten, chances of gastrointestinal cancer can increase by 40 to 100 times that of the normal population. In addition, gastrointestinal carcinoma or lymphoma develops in up to 15 percent of patients with untreated celiac disease.

The only acceptable treatment for celiac disease is strict adherence to a 100% gluten-free diet for life. That measure can prevent almost all complications caused by the disease - without medication - as the small intestine will steadily heal and start absorbing needed nutrients and, therefore, eliminate painful symptoms.

A gluten-free diet means avoiding all products that contain wheat, rye, and barley or any of their

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derivatives. That challenge can prove to be a daunting task as many hidden sources of gluten are found in the ingredients of several processed foods. But the health rewards are tremendous. Being diagnosed with celiac is a life-changing experience. Imagine having to give up bread, pasta, and beer among other things. Where can you go out to eat? Where can you vacation? Where can you find substitutes for the foods you crave? The doctors will not have the answer to these questions. The best source of information on living with celiac is hearing from others who have "been there, done that." If you have been suffering from intestinal problems and have not gotten relief, find out all you can about celiac disease. There are many support groups across the country and several books that can give you information and put you on the road to recovery.

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Peter R. Berlin is the founder of A Personal Touch Publishing which publishes books written from people's first-hand experiences in dealing with life's challenges. Their first book A Personal Touch On...™ Celiac Disease contains over 90 pieces written by people with celiac and is available on-line at www.apersonaltouchon.com/ceciac.

Overview Of IBS

By Susan Reynolds

For the many Americans who suffer from IBS, Irritable bowel syndrome isn't just a problem. It's a way of life. IBS refers to a condition that is characterized by the large intestine not operating in the way that it should. Not really a disease, IBS is a disorder. The interesting thing to note is that patients who suffer from IBS exhibit no abnormalities in their intestine nor have they sustained intestinal damage. That is the real mystery of the disorder.

For this reason, no clear-cut cause for IBS has ever been established. There are some observations and theories on the subject. One thing that experts do note is the fact that IBS appears to include both sensitivity and muscle spasms in the large intestine. Because of this, gas and stool move quickly through the small and large intestines. Patients suffering from IBS may notice that this condition escalates when they are suffering from great amounts of stress. When life is going smoothly, and patients are at ease, the symptoms often fade tremendously.

Patients suffering from IBS have to endure a variety of symptoms. Among these are bloating, diarrhea, sometimes constipation, lower stomach pain, and cramping. The pain that comes along with IBS isn't a constant pain. It can disappear for days or weeks even. The pain often goes away after a patient has a bowel movement.

If you are suffering from IBS, the muscles and nerves that reside in your large intestine have strong responses to outside factors such as stress. Certain foods that don't bother most people can spark stomach muscle contractions that lead to diarrhea when the food is sped through your digestive track.

An extremely common disorder, IBS affects about one in every five Americans over the age of twenty.

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Because of the embarrassing nature of the disorder, many people do not seek medical attention for this problem.

Depending on the severity of your disorder, it can range from annoying to life-altering. In severe cases, it can cause people to be unable to leave the house, maintain a job, or lead an active life. For this reason, it's important to seek medical attention, garner a diagnosis, and discuss treatment options.

IBS differs from other irritable bowel disorders, especially in the fact that there are no abnormalities in the intestines and no apparent cause for the episodes. A doctor makes the diagnosis mostly by evaluating your symptoms and ruling out all other possibilities. Your doctor will more than likely order a series of tests to ensure that you do not suffer from another type of irritable bowel disorder or even a more serious condition.

If you are one of the millions of Americans who suffers from IBS, take comfort in the knowledge that you are not alone. With around 20% of the population suffering from this disorder, it is nothing to be ashamed of. Talk to your doctor about methods of coping with this disorder. Don't let IBS control your life. Many patients lead normal, rich, complete lives.

Susan Reynolds has an interest in IBS. For further information on IBS please visit

or

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