

IBS Treatment Center Newsletter

1229 Madison Street, Suite 1220, Seattle, Washington 98104 (206) 264-1111 www.IBSTreatmentCenter.com

June 2006

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Recent Patient Testimonial

I just want to say thank you for all your help and guidance. I feel so fortunate to have found your [clinic]. I was truly miserable before this diagnosis and had battled my symptoms for too many years. I feel rejuvenated and healthy, and most importantly do not feel limited in my daily life by my symptoms. I am now focusing on riding the "Courage Classic". It is a three day bike ride across Snoqualmie, Blewett, and Stevens pass, a fund raiser for Mary Bridge Children's Hospital. Had I not found a solution to my IBS I'm not sure I would be able to do this ride otherwise.

Abigail Schneidmiller



IBS: The Role of Good Bacteria

Did you know that you are full of bacteria?

It sounds a bit creepy at first, but the truth is that certain bacteria are good for you! Your digestive tract contains approximately 100 trillion bacteria. These organisms are critical for proper digestive function and even the health of your entire body. There are two types of bacteria that are particularly important to good health. These are *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Bifidobacterium*.

What is a probiotic?

These good bacteria are called "probiotics" (as opposed to *antibiotics*) because they are bacteria that affect our health in a positive manner. They are important for digesting and absorbing your food, regulating immune function in your digestive tract and even for making some vitamins. Unfortunately, many people don't have enough good bacteria.

What happens if you don't have enough good bacteria?

Insufficient probiotics in the digestive tract may lead to a variety of complaints. These include **irritable bowel syndrome, gas, bloating, indigestion, abdominal pain, diarrhea, yeast infections, and believe it or not, skin disorders**. Insufficient probiotics in infancy may contribute to the development of asthma, eczema, runny nose, and even food allergies. Also, other harmful bacteria and yeast

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(Candida) are much more likely to establish themselves and thrive when the digestive tract is not adequately colonized with probiotics.

Where do probiotics come from?

These bacteria are normally introduced into the sterile GI tract during a vaginal birth. We also pick them up while breastfeeding when we're young. It is at these times that the GI tract is seeded with good bacteria. These bacteria also exist to some extent in our environment.

What causes an absence of probiotics?

Not ever having an adequate amount of probiotics colonize in the digestive tract is one way to be deficient in these bacteria. Picking up bad bacteria in your food can negatively affect your bacterial environment. Even stress can decrease probiotics. Another common cause of the reduction or absence of good bacteria is the use of antibiotics. Most antibiotics are broad spectrum, meaning that they kill many types of bacteria, both good and bad. Any time that antibiotics are used it is important that probiotics are replaced in order to re-establish colonies and to prevent other bacteria or yeast from growing in their absence. It does not matter how long ago you lost your good bacteria. They do not necessarily come back on their own.

How do I replace these good bacteria?

Yogurt and milk products have some good bacteria in them. However, these are often inadequate for re-establishing large colonies of probiotics. A high quality *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Bifidobacterium* supplement is required to replenish these bacteria. These products must be refrigerated (unless freeze dried) before, during and after being sold in order to maintain live bacteria. They also must contain the strains of probiotics that are resistant to stomach acid and bile salts, are capable

of attachment to the wall of the GI tract, and are provided in high enough amounts to establish themselves.

Depending on the deficiency of good bacteria, one may need hundreds of billions of organisms in order for good bacteria to re-establish itself among the 100 trillion organisms present.

Where do I find good probiotics?

Many probiotic products do not meet these requirements and therefore will have little if any therapeutic value. People with dairy allergies should also be careful to take a probiotic product that is dairy free, as most probiotics are grown in a dairy medium. Probiotics should always be taken with food. At the IBS Treatment Center we have evaluated many products and used them on hundreds of patients. Our favorites are available on the [website](#).

How do I know if I have enough good bacteria?

Proper stool testing can actually measure your levels of *acidophilus* and *Bifidobacterium* as well as the existence of any of the hundred or so other bad bacteria and yeast. Most doctors do not offer these tests. They are routinely run at the IBS Treatment Center and are vital to treating IBS and other digestive problems. If you suffer from any of these problems be sure to have these tests run by a qualified doctor. For more information please visit our website, www.IBSTreatmentCenter.com, or call us at 206-264-1111.



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Patient Success Story!

**True story. Names have been changed to throw off the paparazzi.*

A worried father brought his 12-year-old son, Thomas, to the IBS Treatment Center and was very concerned about his son's health. He told me that Thomas had terrible tummy aches and only about one bowel movement every week. They had been to many doctors, but no one had been able to help Thomas with his constipation. Thomas would use laxatives or enemas as needed, but those only gave him temporary relief, never really solving his problem.

Thomas was shy and embarrassed, but he was able to tell us that he was often in pain and that it greatly interrupted his life, even affecting his schoolwork. Lab work showed that his thyroid was working properly, so we ruled that out as a cause of his problem. He had already seen a gastroenterologist and there were no physical abnormalities.

We recommended that Thomas take a blood test for food allergies. When the results were in it was discovered that Thomas was very allergic to dairy and to eggs. Within two weeks his parents called. They were thrilled to report that Thomas no longer had any more tummy aches and that he now went to the bathroom at least every other day with no problem! We're happy to report that Thomas continues to feel great and is finally able to enjoy being a kid!

**Are you rejoicing over success you found at the IBS Treatment Center? We want to hear about it! Send us your story or testimonial and it may be published in a future issue of the IBS Newsletter! Email us at*

Info@IBSTreatmentCenter.com

Events Calendar:

July: IBS Support Group

Great news for IBS sufferers! The IBS Treatment Center is now offering a monthly meeting for people looking for new information, ideas and support in dealing with Irritable Bowel Syndrome. Most meetings will be attended by Dr. Stephen Wangen, founder of the IBS Treatment Center and author of *The Irritable Bowel Syndrome Solution*. Come join us and regain some hope! The group will meet on the **first Tuesday of every month**, except for July 4th, when we'll meet on Thursday, July 06, 2006 (due to the holiday) Meetings are held **at the IBS Treatment Center**.

[Click here for details.](#)

August: GIG (Gluten Intolerance Group) Support Group

Dealing with a Gluten allergy or intolerance can often feel like an uphill battle, but you are not alone! New information, ideas and special products are coming out all the time. Come to the Central Seattle chapter of GIG and stay on top of it all while enjoying the company of people who, like you, know what it's like to just want a piece of real bread or a beer! Meetings will be held on the **2nd Wednesday of each month**, starting in August, **at the IBS Treatment Center** (co-located with the Center for Food Allergies) and most will be attended by Dr. Stephen Wangen, founder of the IBS Treatment Center and Center for Food Allergies.

[Click here for details.](#)

