

# GUT INSTINCT

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IBD AND IBS? - WHY YOU NEED TO KNOW.

It's easy to confuse the two, as **IBS** (Irritable Bowel Syndrome) and **IBD** (Inflammatory Bowel Disease) often present with similar symptoms, like abdominal pain or discomfort, bloating or a change in bowel habit.



It is important to understand how IBS and IBD differ and to get an accurate diagnosis, as they are very different conditions, and the treatments are not the same. **Knowing if it's IBS or IBD will allow you to effectively manage your condition.**

### WHAT IS IBS?

IBS is a common condition that affects 1 in 5 Australians, with more women affected than men. IBS is a functional gastrointestinal disorder, which means there is a disturbance in the way the bowel functions.

IBS does not cause inflammation, and there is no sign of disease or abnormality on inspection of the bowel. With IBS, there is no increased risk of bowel cancer, or developing IBD.

Symptoms include abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhoea and constipation (sometimes both at the same time). Symptoms can be triggered by certain foods, stress, hormonal changes and some medications. IBS symptoms are often temporarily relieved after a bowel movement. **Most often, treatment focuses on dietary and lifestyle changes, including stress reduction.**

### WHAT IS IBD?

IBD is an umbrella term for diseases that involve inflammation of the digestive tract. The two most common are Crohn's disease (inflammation is usually at the end of the small intestine) and ulcerative colitis (inflammation of the large intestine).

Those with IBD are thought to have dysregulated immune systems that cause inflammation in the bowel. This damage can be seen on inspection of the bowel and can be permanent. If not detected and treated early, IBD can also cause more serious complications. Those with IBD have a small increased risk of bowel cancer, but early intervention can prevent life-threatening situations.

Symptoms include diarrhoea, bleeding ulcers, abdominal pain, bloating, unintentional weight loss and anaemia.

### HOW DO I KNOW IF MY SYMPTOMS ARE IBS, IBD, OR SOMETHING ELSE?

Your doctor will take a full medical history, ask you about any alarm symptoms (which can include rectal bleeding family history of IBD, severe pain or unexplained weight loss), and will order any necessary blood or stool tests. They may suggest further investigation with endoscopy, especially if IBD is suspected. It should also be noted that those diagnosed with IBD, can also have IBS. The two conditions can co-exist.

Both IBS and IBD can have a huge impact on one's quality of life. Going out for meals, or not knowing where the nearest bathroom is, can cause much anxiety, not to mention the symptoms themselves causing pain and discomfort.

**Whilst both IBS and IBD are not curable, they are manageable. Early diagnosis will ensure a suitable treatment plan is in place so your symptoms don't control your life.**

## SPICE UP YOUR LIFE !

It is well accepted that the health of your gut can affect the overall health of your body, including your brain. The microbes (bacteria and other micro-organisms) in your digestive system exist in a delicate balance.



By eating a diverse range of foods, including fresh vegetables and fruit, whole grains and fermented foods, we can help our gut maintain the right amount of 'good' bacteria. Certain spices can also provide benefits for our gut health.

**CINNAMON** contains antioxidants that can potentially slow down the production of free radicals and prevent oxidative damage to your cells. This may reduce the risk of certain illnesses. Cinnamon may also lower your blood sugar levels by slowing the breakdown of carbohydrates in your intestines, and maintaining a better balance of nutrients within your gut. Cinnamon also has anti-inflammatory effects.

**GINGER** can help settle an upset stomach, which is why it's often used to combat nausea. Many people also find it works to ease painful indigestion when consumed with a meal or as a tea.

## CINNAMON GINGER BISCUITS



With the festive season upon us, here is a recipe by Julia Pinney using two of the spices listed above. Perfect to share with friends and family. Moreish biscuits with a chewy centre!

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/4 cup flour
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup butter at room temperature
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- extra sugar for rolling the cookies

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 180 C. Line a tray with paper and set aside.
- In a bowl, sift together the flour, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda and salt.
- In the bowl of your electric mixer, mix the butter and both sugars on high speed until light and fluffy, about 3 min. Beat in the egg until just combined.
- Stir in the flour mixture until combined and a dough forms. About a minute.
- Form into one inch balls, roll in sugar and place about 2 inches apart on a baking tray.
- Gently flatten each ball with your fingers.
- Place the unbaked cookies in the fridge for about 30 min.
- Bake for 10 - 12 min. or until slightly golden and crispy the edges and soft in the middle.
- Remove from oven and place on a cooling rack. Cookies will set as they cool.