



## Weight Fluctuation in Irritable Bowel Syndrome

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

### Changes in Your Digestive System With Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Diarrhea, bloating and cramps that come with irritable bowel syndrome may make sufferers vulnerable to fluctuations in weight. The effects of this condition differ from person to person, but it is not uncommon to see a significant shift in weight from episode to episode of IBS. Let's dive into weight fluctuation in irritable bowel syndrome.

One of the logical reasons the weight changes happen is because there are such great ongoing changes in the digestive systems of sufferers. Weight loss can occur, for example, because diarrhea or other associated conditions keep the body at a loss for nutrients. Typically, as soon as you eat, the digestive system is quickly working the food out of your body as waste. It becomes tempting sometimes to avoid food to avoid the pain and cramps. This makes those with IBS drop pounds rather quickly.

On the other hand, there are times when cramps and bloating subside and the IBS sufferer feels relaxed enough to eat more of the foods they like. To make up for the times when eating was a discomfort, many people eat more than usual. As a result, they gain weight. Either way, severe weight loss or fast weight gain can be dangerous.

Once your physician begins to notice a pattern of losing weight, he is usually signaled to watch for any indication of other conditions. Continually dropping pounds could mean serious damage to your intestinal tract. One of the illnesses associated with this pattern is ulcerative colitis, which is a chronic inflammation of the colon. The innermost layer of the colon develops small ulcers or tears and blood and mucous are discharged from the rectum.

The other serious condition that can result from prolonged IBS is Crohn's disease. It is also an inflammatory disease, but it can attack either the colon or the small intestine. The complications that result from Crohn's disease can affect the body's ability to process food. This makes it potentially life-threatening. Symptoms from Crohn's disease can affect any part of the digestive tract from the mouth to the anus, and there can be healthy tissue between segments of the tract that are very diseased. Both Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are part of a family of illnesses known as Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

### Controlling Your Weight When You Have IBS

There are certain foods the IBS sufferer should avoid curbing weight gain: salty foods; those with artificial sweeteners; those with a high level of fructose, including fruit; dairy products; and lentils and beans. These foods cause bloating and water retention in the stomach. The tricky part of avoiding these foods and maintaining an IBS-friendly diet is that the foods you tend to eat while avoiding those on the danger list tend to be carbohydrates and increase calories. This tips the scale to make you weigh more.

One of the best approaches for stabilizing weight is to control calories. Those who have had difficulty keeping the pounds off might try to slowly introduce high-fiber foods into their diets. Some of those foods include whole wheat

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or whole grain bread; nuts and legumes; apples, pears and raspberries; and broccoli, peas and Brussels sprouts.

When discussing weight fluctuation in irritable bowel syndrome, exercise plays an important role; it is essential since it regulates your weight. It improves your muscle tone and helps you deal with the stress that can often occur as you manage the symptoms of IBS. Your body becomes better able to cope with any sudden or drastic changes. Over time, exercise helps to decrease the painful spasms that can occur in the intestines when IBS flares up. Fluctuations in your weight can become frustrating if you are not being proactive enough to prepare for them. IBS often has to be a way of life, but it does not have to ruin the quality of your life.