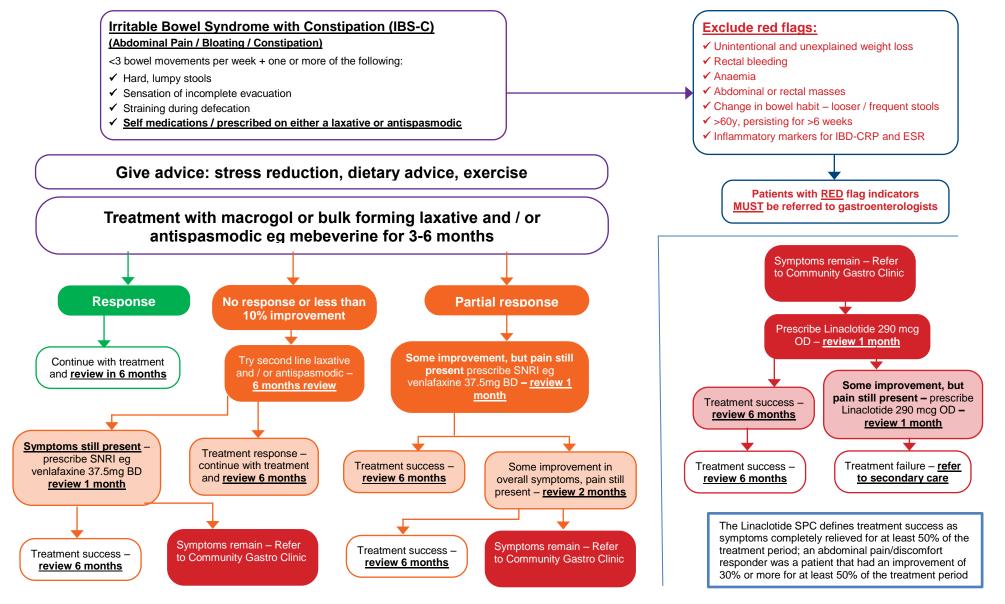




Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Milton Keynes Community Health Services

Management of Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Constipation (IBS-C)



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Milton Keynes Community Health Services

Additional Information

What advice should I give regarding diet and lifestyle?

- Encourage people with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) to try to identify sources of stress, and discuss ways to create relaxation time.
- Give advice regarding diet. Advise the person to:
- Adjust their fibre intake according to their symptoms:
- Fibre intake often needs to be reduced in people with IBS. Advise people to reduce their intake of insoluble fibre, such as wholemeal or high-fibre flour and breads, cereals high in bran, and whole grains such as brown rice.
- If more fibre is needed, recommend soluble fibre supplements (for example Ispaghula) or foods high in soluble fibre (for example oats).
- People with wind and bloating may find it helpful to eat oats and linseeds (up to one tablespoon per day).
- Have regular meals and take time to eat.
- Drink at least eight cups of fluid per day, especially water or other non-caffeinated drinks (for example herbal teas). Tea and coffee should be restricted to three cups per day, and the intake of alcohol and fizzy drinks should be reduced.
- Reduce intake of 'resistant starch' (starch that resists digestion in the small intestine and reaches the colon intact), which is often found in processed or recooked foods.
- Limit fresh fruit to three portions per day (a portion should be approximately 80 g).
- Avoid sorbitol (an artificial sweetener) if they have diarrhoea.
- If diet continues to be considered a major factor in the person's symptoms and they are following general diet and lifestyle advice, consider referring to a dietitian for advice and treatment, including a trial of wheat or lactose exclusion.
- Give people with low physical activity levels brief advice and counselling on how to increase their activity levels.
- Adults should aim to do 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on at least 5 days of the week.
- This can be achieved either by doing all the daily activity in one session, or by doing several sessions of at least 10 minutes.
- The activity can be lifestyle-based (for example climbing stairs, walking, or cycling), structured exercise (for example attending a dance class or fitness training session), outdoor sport, or a combination of these.
- Increased physical activity may not be appropriate for people with diarrhoea-predominant IBS, and people with certain medical conditions.