

IBS: Linseeds and Symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome

This dietary advice sheet gives some general information to help you change your diet. If you need more detailed advice, or if you are following a special diet that makes it difficult to make these changes, please ask your doctor to refer you to a registered dietitian.

Linseeds may help improve some symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome:

- constipation
- bloating
- abdominal pain

Any improvement in symptoms of constipation, abdominal pain and bloating may be gradual. Try linseeds for an initial period of 3 months. However, it may take up to 6 months for you to notice the full benefit.

Linseeds

Linseeds (also known as flaxseeds) are good sources of soluble fibre, which helps to soften the stool and make it easier to pass.

Always ensure you have a good fluid intake if you increase the amount of soluble fibre in your diet.

- You can use golden linseed or brown linseed. These can be whole or ground/ milled.
- Linseeds can be added to food such as cereals, yogurts, soup, salad or baked in bread.
- Linseeds can also be taken as a daily supplement. If you find it difficult to take them whole, try grinding them before sprinkling onto foods.
- Linseeds are available from major supermarkets and health food shops.
- Increase your intake gradually – start with 1 teaspoon per day to give your bowels time to adjust. Increase gradually to 1 tablespoon then to a maximum of 2 tablespoons per day (rather than the dose recommended by the manufacturer).

Fluid

- It is very important that you take the linseeds with plenty of fluids, such as water, therefore:
- Have an extra 200ml of fluid per tablespoon of linseeds, taken at the same time as the linseeds.

Diverticular disease – if you have been diagnosed with diverticular disease, always use ground linseeds (NOT whole).