

BOOK REVIEWS

Digestion, Diet, and Disease. Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Gastrointestinal Function

Vickerstaff, Joneja JM, ed
Rutgers University Press
ISBN: 0-8135-3387-2; \$75.00

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), the most frequent functional gastrointestinal disorder with a prevalence of 15%–20% in the Western world, is the most common reason for referral consultation to gastroenterologists and the second most common reason to seek care from general physicians. It accounts for high economical costs to society in terms of direct medical costs and indirect costs such as work absenteeism. Recent advances in basic and clinical sciences have revealed that several mechanisms interact to ultimately produce this multifactor disorder including abnormalities in intestinal motility, visceral sensitivity, and processing of visceral pain in the central nervous system which is probably influenced by psychological factors and stress. Yet, patients commonly report their symptoms in relation to food and diet and *Digestion, Diet, and Disease. Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Gastrointestinal Function* focuses on this relationship. The author, a PhD in medical microbiology and a registered dietitian, founder and head of the Allergy, Nutrition Research Program at Vancouver Hospital and Health Sciences Centre, nicely reviews each component of the multifactor disease model of IBS, and its relation to food and diet. The book focuses on the recognition and understanding of the mechanisms underlying the food/gut interaction contributing to the expression of IBS symptoms such as immunological, physiological, pharmacological, and psychogenic factors and discusses and suggests strategies that should be managed by qualified physicians and dietary management for the registered dietitian/nutritionists.

The book is arranged in 16 chapters including the definition of IBS, the functions of the gastrointestinal tract, gastrointestinal motility, immunity, inflammation, the role of microorganisms in the digestive tract, colonization and fermentation in the small intestines, maldigestion of carbohydrates, infection and toxicity in the digestive tract, food allergy, intolerance, psychological factors and stress in IBS as well as therapeutic and dietary management strategies and deter-

(continued on page 50)

BOOK REVIEWS

(continued from page 24)

mining the tolerated foods. At the end there are 4 appendices. Two of them include the definitions and very practical eating plans for disaccharidase deficiency and, more specifically, for lactose intolerance. The third appendix includes meal plans for the IBS diet recommended for a trial period. The last appendix is a challenge food test checklist to give to our patients where they can record their symptoms with directions to follow the next instructions in case of no reactions or to stop in case of adverse reactions.

This book is easy to read and understand and fulfills the aims of the author including providing a guide of the way in which each part of the digestive tract might be damaged by external agents such as infective microorganisms or abnormalities in the central processing of the information rising from this system and, finally, in providing guidelines for food delivery with a complete balanced nutrition with no further injury or symptom exacerbation.

It would make excellent reading for any patient suffering from IBS too.

Max J. Schmulson, MD
Assistant Professor of Medicine-Universidad Panamericana de México.
Assistant Professor of the Gastrointestinal Motility Postgraduate Program-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
National Researcher-Sistema Nacional de Investigadores de México.
Member of the Department of Gastroenterology, Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Médicas y Nutrición Salvador Zubirán and Department of Gastroenterology and Motility Unit, Clínica Lomas Altas, Mexico City, Mexico

George W. Meyer, M.D., Book Editor, is on the Editorial Board of *Practical Gastroenterology*

