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## health

### Doctors urged to use hypnotherapy to ease IBS symptoms

Last updated at 21:06 24 May 2007



Hypnotherapy can be used to ease IBS

Hypnotherapy could be the latest weapon in the fight against irritable bowel syndrome, providing benefits that last up to five years.

Conventional treatment ? including antidepressant and painkilling drugs ? is ineffective, according to a report which says doctors should consider offering psychological therapies.

The report says the condition may have a partial "psychological basis".

Up to one in six Britons is affected by IBS, of whom three out of four are women. Symptoms include flatulence, diarrhoea, constipation and a bloated, painful abdomen.

Small trials have found hypnotherapy was successful as a means of managing symptoms, says a report published today in the British Medical Journal.

It found patients with IBS are more likely to suffer from depression and "abnormal" behaviour patterns including anxiety.

They also display somatisation ? the conversion of emotional, mental, or psychosocial problems into physical complaints.

"This has led to the idea that IBS has a psychological as well as a biological basis and a growing body of evidence supports the use of antidepressants for IBS," says the report.

However, some doctors are reluctant to prescribe drugs for patients not suffering from depression and this has led to experiments with psychological treatments.

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Experts using hypnotherapy at specialist IBS centres claim its benefits can last up to five years.

Dr Ian Forgacs, of the department of gastroenterology at King's College Hospital, London, who co-wrote the report, said many sufferers were probably being denied help because of a lack of access to psychological therapists.

But further evidence was needed before hypnotherapy should be adopted on a large scale.

Find this story at [www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-457494/Doctors-urged-use-hypnotherapy-ease-IBS-symptoms.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-457494/Doctors-urged-use-hypnotherapy-ease-IBS-symptoms.html)

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