

Faber SM. 2000. Treatment of abnormal gut flora improves symptoms in patients with irritable bowel syndrome. *Am J Gastroenterol* 95(9):2533.

Abstract

Purpose: IBS is a common GI disorder without effective medical therapy. Studies suggest that IBS pts. have an imbalance of their Gut Flora and show improvement in symptoms of abdominal pain, gas and bloating after supplementation with exogenous flora. In addition to flora we used pancreatic enzymes, antibiotics and antifungals when indicated based on stool analysis results.

Methods: We performed a retrospective analysis of 26 pts. with IBS by ROME criteria who completed a stool analysis and health questionnaire before and 4-6 weeks after treatment. 20F, 6M mean age 57 y/o were treated with a combination of lactobacillus acidophilus NCFM[®], bifidobacterium infantis, pancreatic enzymes, antibiotics and/or antifungals. Stool Analysis: Below normal levels of stool lactobacillus 21/26 (80%) and bifidobacterium 13/26 (50%) were noted. Major pathogenic organisms identified included *Klebsiella Pneumonia* 16/26 (62%) *Citrobacter Freundi* 15/26 (19%) *Pseudomonas Aeuroginosa* 3/26 (12%) *Klebsiella Oxytoca* 3/26 (12%). Significant yeast organisms abnormally present in stool included *Candida Albicans* 10/26 (38%) and *Candida Glabrata* 4/26 (15%). Abnormal yeast growth was found in 18/26 (69%) of pts. Undigested meal fibers were found in 9/26 (35%) pts.

Results: Patients noted improvement in bloating 19/26 (73%), reduction in passage of excess gas 14/26 (54%), decreased abdominal pain/cramps 16/26 (62%), decrease in diarrhea 16/26 (62%), improvement of constipation 14/26 (54%), decrease in alternating diarrhea and constipation 15/26 (58%), decrease in the sensation of incomplete evacuation 7/26 (27%).

Conclusions: Some IBS pts. have an imbalanced gut flora including deficiency of beneficial organisms such as *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium*. This imbalance may also predispose to an overgrowth of pathogenic bacteria and yeast. Inadequate protein digestion may also produce classical IBS symptomatology. Supplementation with beneficial indigenous microflora, treating culture positive growth of pathogenic bacteria/yeast and using pancreatic enzymes in our study showed a significant improvement in the most common IBS symptoms.