



### [Organic Fennel Tummy Tea](#)

**Exceptional for IBS bloating and gas - now in a re-sealable canister!**

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### [Organic Peppermint Tummy Tea](#)

**Outstanding for IBS pain, spasms, and urgency - now in a re-sealable canister!**

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## HEATHER'S IBS NEWSLETTER HELP FOR IBS.COM

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June 7, 2005

**This week - [Peppermint Tummy Tea](#) and [Fennel Tummy Tea](#) on Sale!**

**Plus, [The Five Constipation Frustrations](#)**

Hello to everyone -

If you missed last week's newsletter, we've got one more week of a special sale. Our [Fennel Tummy Tea](#) and [Peppermint Tummy Tea](#) are now in canisters, and they're both on sale only through this newsletter! The teas are organic medical foods with high volatile oil contents, developed specifically for the dietary management of IBS. The new cans are easily re-fillable with Tummy Teas from the bulk foil bags.

Our fabulous [IBS Recipe Index](#) has been newly updated by moderator Melissa (Mags), so if you're looking for some delicious summer treats this is the place to find them. Plus, as always, the latest IBS news and research. Enjoy!

Best Wishes,  
Heather Van Vorous

Did a friend send you this newsletter? [Sign up here](#) for your own free subscription.

*Food & Recipes*

### **Wild Berry Breakfast Smoothie**

This recipe is a delicious example of how to safely incorporate a generous amount of healthy insoluble fiber foods (the berries and cherries) into your diet. It is especially crucial for people who are prone to constipation to eat as much insoluble fiber as possible - but you have to do so carefully! Always have a soluble fiber foundation to your meals and snacks (in this recipe, the banana) and try to cook, blend, or chop your insoluble fiber foods (this mechanically breaks down the fiber, and minimizes the IBS problems it can cause).

Best of all? This smoothie is creamy, rich, and berry delicious! Use the berries frozen for an extra-thick result, or fresh if you've got a summer bounty of fruit on your hands.

**Makes 2 Servings (easily doubled)**

2/3 c. vanilla soy or rice milk  
1-2 tablespoon honey  
1 large firm-ripe banana  
3/4 c. fresh or frozen blueberries  
3/4 c. fresh or frozen pitted cherries

Puree all ingredients in food processor (or blender) until smooth, scraping down sides with a rubber spatula as necessary. Serve immediately.

**For oodles of other delicious recipes, come visit the newly updated (thanks Melissa!) [IBS Recipe Exchange board!](#)**

**Are you just learning how to eat for IBS? Don't understand the difference between soluble and insoluble fiber, and feeling a little intimidated at the thought of special IBS recipes? Don't worry! Come see [the IBS Diet pages](#), and find the answers to all your questions.**



**[Try the IBS Diet Kit #2 - for Diarrhea AND Constipation!](#)**

**Here's the immediate, tangible help you need to take control of your IBS symptoms through diet. Includes the book *Eating for IBS*, *Tummy Fiber Acacia*, and *Peppermint Oil Tummy Tamers*. Help regulate bowel motility and *prevent* painful IBS spasms!**

Did you miss the latest IBS newsletter and [How Herbs Help IBS?](#)

*Special Events*

**[New Retail Stores Carrying Heather's Tummy Care Products](#)**

Past issues  
are [posted here!](#)

We're continuing our special rebate offer for people who buy Tummy Care products [at their local stores](#), and we have new store announcements this week as well!

#### Arizona

New Frontiers Natural Foods  
1112 Iron Springs Rd  
Prescott, AZ 86305  
928-445-7370

#### North Carolina

Greenlife Grocery  
70 Merrimon Ave  
Asheville, NC 28801  
828-254-5440

#### Texas

Wellbody Natural Foods  
3708 34th St  
Lubbock, TX 79410  
806-793-1015

If you don't have a store in your area carrying Tummy Care products yet, you can give them [this flyer](#) to ask them.

*Rx News & Research*

### Colon Cancer Test Misses Growths in Women

A widely used screening tool for colon cancer, sigmoidoscopy, misses precancerous growths in almost two-thirds of women -- a disturbing failure rate twice as high as the one seen in men, a government-backed study found. "All our data until now has been based on men. What this data shows is it's a lot worse in women," said Dr. Philip Schoenfeld of the University of Michigan and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The researchers said colonoscopy - a more reliable but more expensive test than sigmoidoscopy - should now be considered the preferred method for most women. Even before the study, patients were increasingly choosing colonoscopies, in part because of serious questions about the reliability of sigmoidoscopies. The latest research is likely to accelerate the trend. [Go here for more information about this study...](#)

### Relief for Celiac Patients

An easy-to-use tool for the detection of gluten in foods will be developed in an EU-funded project designed to help people with celiac disease avoid problem foods. Gluten, which causes the symptoms of the disease, is common in many foodstuffs, even if the product itself is not a cereal product, and due to its increasing use as a food additive its presence in many products is not immediately obvious. Scientists in the project will use new knowledge on the development of reliable and easy to handle test systems for the detection of gluten in food products.

The symptoms of celiac disease can vary with each individual and they do not always involve the digestive system. They can range from no symptoms at all, to severe ones, such as gas, bloating, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, irritability, muscle cramps or fatigue. Because of the broad range of symptoms that celiac disease presents, it can be difficult to diagnose. [Go here for more information about this study...](#)

[Go here for more information about celiac, and how it can be misdiagnosed as \(or can occur along with\) IBS...](#)

### UK Investigates Dietary Management of Constipation

UK researchers are to investigate how dietary changes could help people better manage constipation in the biggest study on the condition ever undertaken. Constipation affects one in five older people and the burden on healthcare resources is expected to increase as the proportion of older people in the population rises. In Britain, it leads to nearly half a million doctor's consultations each year and doctors prescribe more drugs for the condition than they do for patients with diabetes or high blood pressure. Yet it has largely been overlooked for major health studies.

The new research will examine how effectively patients can manage their constipation by making changes to their diet and lifestyle. The usual method of treating constipation is to prescribe laxatives. Results to determine the most cost-effective way of managing constipation will be used by the government to inform the treatment of constipation by health professionals nationwide. [Go here for more information about this study...](#)

### Prebiotic Shown to Increase Bone Mineral Density

A daily prebiotic supplement helps to increase bone mineral density, shows new research funded by inulin maker Orafit. Many young girls get as little as 10 per cent of the calcium they need each day. By increasing the mineral density of bone in early life and retaining it, osteoporosis risk can be significantly reduced. The new study, carried out by Professor S. Abrams from the Baylor College of Medicine and the Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, shows a significant 15 per cent increase of calcium retention and accretion within the bones of the 100 girls and boys, aged nine to 13, after one year of supplementation. [Go here for more information about this study...](#)

[Go here for information about the prebiotic supplement Acacia...](#)

### Fiber's New Role in Type 2 Diabetes

From the threat of kidney failure to blindness to nerve damage and foot infections and skin problems, type 2 diabetes takes a heavy toll on your health. Now, a new study by the American Heart Association has found that a relatively simple supplement can help prevent heart disease in type 2 diabetics, perhaps the worst health consequence of the condition.

In the study, researchers had 78 participants with type 2 diabetes take 10g to 15g of an over-the-counter fiber supplement in 5-gram doses two to three times daily 5 to 10 minutes before eating. Total blood cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL ("bad" cholesterol) and HDL ("good" cholesterol) were measured at the beginning of the study and at 90 days.

At the end of 90 days, researchers found remarkable results. In addition to observing both total cholesterol and triglyceride levels drop more than 14 percent, LDL levels decreased nearly 29 percent and HDL levels increased 21.8 percent. All of these results have been found to help decrease the risk for heart disease. All the subjects taking the fiber were virtually free of side effects. The most important statement of all made by the researchers was the potential for fiber supplementation to be a viable alternative to statin drugs, the

most popular class of cholesterol-lowering drugs. [Go here for more information about this study...](#)

**Looking for comprehensive IBS research and news?  
[Check here in the IBS Research Library!](#)**



**[Peppermint Oil Caps with Fennel and Ginger Are Amazing!](#)**

**Our Peppermint Oil Caps, with the added benefits of fennel and ginger oils, are a medical food truly unbeatable for the dietary management of IBS abdominal pain, spasms, and bloating!**

*Ask Heather*

### **The Five Constipation Frustrations**

**"What if you think you're doing everything you're supposed to do for constipation, but nothing is working?!"**

Well, first of all, take a deep breath, relax, and realize that you're not all alone here - and you're definitely not helpless, even if it sometimes feels that way. Constipation tends to be one of the more frustrating IBS symptoms, and it *does* take longer to resolve through lifestyle changes than diarrhea. But - there are many, many ways to help alleviate constipation successfully, it just takes a little patience and persistence.

What's the best way to take control of IBS constipation? Just make sure you avoid **The Five Constipation Frustrations**. We'll tackle the first two this week:

#### **1. Soluble Fiber Supplements Are Overnight Wonder Drugs, Right?**

Soluble fiber supplements (like [Acacia Tummy Fiber](#)) can work wonders for constipation, yes. But they are NOT an overnight solution, and they're definitely not drugs. It makes a great deal of difference *how* you take a soluble fiber supplement, and it's well worth the time and effort to do it right. (Here's a great resource page about [soluble fiber supplements](#) if this is all brand new territory for you.)

First of all, these are the best ways to NOT get the results you want from a soluble fiber supplement:

- \* Try one at a low dose for a few days, then give up because there's no change.
- \* Go from zero to the maximum dose in one week flat, then give up because it's not working and now you're all bloated and gassy as well.
- \* Start taking one at the same time you stop taking laxatives, enemas, or colon cleanses you've been using regularly, then give up because your constipation is suddenly worse, not better.

The cardinal rule with a soluble fiber supplement (SFS) is to start at a low dose (for Acacia, just 1/2 a level measuring teaspoon, twice daily), and increase **gradually**. Constipation often requires a much higher daily dose of a SFS than diarrhea, and it can take several weeks, or even a few months, to slowly work your way up to the maximum daily dose. SFS are not laxatives, and they will not give "overnight relief", so taking a low dose of one for a few days will not alleviate your symptoms. What it will do is begin to acclimate your gut to a higher daily dose of fiber, and this is the goal. Don't give up as soon as you start - just realize that using a SFS is a slow, steady process. You will see improvements along the way.

It's tempting to think that if you need to reach the maximum dose to see the best results, you can just force your body to adjust to a high dose as fast as possible. After all, if your constipation will resolve on a SFS dose of, say, 25 grams a day, and it might typically take someone, say, 8 weeks to reach that dose, you'll be way ahead of the game if you race your way up to that dose in your very first week - right? Nope - wrong.

By definition, if you have IBS, you do not have a normally functioning gut. No matter how your IBS symptoms manifest (constipation or diarrhea, bloating or pain) your GI tract - and specifically, your [gastrocolic reflex](#) - is hyper-reactive to normal stimuli. Your goal should always be to keep your gastrocolic reflex stable so you can soothe and regulate your gut function.

Suddenly overloading your bowel with a fiber dose that is possibly ten times what you were taking before you started a SFS will do nothing but give you bloating and gas, as your GI tract struggles to deal with all of this unexpected fiber. Fiber is, after all, an undigestible carbohydrate, and your body needs to work to process it through your digestive tract.

Asking your gut to go from no soluble fiber supplement to a maximum daily dose too quickly is like trying to become a marathon runner by sprinting as hard and as fast as you can without rest. It won't work, you'll be frustrated, and you'll give up. Instead, go slowly, increase your dose gradually, and give your body the time and gentle approach it needs to adjust to the SFS increase. You can't beat your colon into submission with IBS, you need to kindly, patiently, and consistently coax it into normal motility. A SFS can help do this for you if you give it a fair chance.

If you've been regularly using laxatives, or artificially increasing colon motility through other means (enemas, colon cleanses, harsh stimulant herbs such as senna, cascara, aloe) the odds are pretty good that your bowel is dependent on them. If you suddenly stop using them, bowel motility might shut down and your constipation will seriously worsen.



This would be the case even if you didn't add a SFS at the same time.

It is definitely possible to transition from a laxative or other unnatural methods of alleviating constipation to a soluble fiber supplement. But, you can't simply switch from one to the other in a single day and expect equivalent results. What you can do is keep taking your usual dose of laxatives while you begin your SFS and start to gradually increase your SFS dose. When you've been able to reach a fairly high daily dose (say, 2-3 tablespoons of the Acacia) you can start to gradually decrease your laxative.

Keep increasing the SFS and continue decreasing your laxative, taking each step slowly and carefully. This is not likely to be a fast process, but the slower and steadier you go the more likely it is to have a highly successful result. I've heard from numerous people who transitioned off of laxatives, senna, enemas, and even prescription constipation drugs and onto a soluble fiber supplement, with terrific results. But it took anywhere from one to six months, depending on how long their bowels had been dependent on the laxatives. Good things can be well worth the wait, and this is one of those situations where patience is truly a virtue. IBS is a lifelong problem for most people, so giving yourself a few months to make a tremendous improvement is not really taking too much time in the grand scheme of things.

## 2. Insoluble Fiber Foods Are IBS Triggers, So I Won't Eat Any!

The second of our Five Constipation Frustrations is another example of how taking something to an extreme, instead of in moderation, can make IBS worse instead of better.

**Insoluble fiber** foods (like bran, raw fibrous veggies, salad greens, unpeeled fruits) are very powerful GI tract stimulants, and for those of us with over-reactive guts due to IBS they can spell big trouble. For people with normal bowel function, insoluble fiber can relieve constipation and poses no problems. For constipation from IBS, however, insoluble fiber can trigger violent GI spasms that are very painful. Additionally, these spasms can actually seize up the colon muscles in a type of "charley horse", which results in slower (or no) bowel motility and **worsens** constipation.

For this reason, insoluble fiber needs to be treated with care. Here's the catch. **For general good health, and for healthy bowel function overall, insoluble fiber foods need to be eaten as generously and as frequently as possible.** While you can break the cycle of IBS attacks by eating nothing but soluble fiber foods for a few days, this is a short-term approach to simply calming your gut and the spasms. Once you've stabilized, you cannot simply continue to eliminate insoluble fiber foods from your diet on a daily basis. This is a mistake made by many people who glance over the **insoluble fiber cautions** without taking the time to read the information thoroughly and to follow recipes that exemplify the diet (all of which safely add insoluble fiber foods to a soluble fiber foundation, as in the berry smoothie recipe featured above).

For people with IBS, and especially IBS constipation, insoluble fiber foods require a balancing act. I really can't emphasize strongly enough that they *cannot* be avoided altogether. They are potential triggers, but you must eat them, and if you do so carefully, according to the **Eating for IBS guidelines**, you should be able to incorporate a wide variety of insoluble fiber foods into your daily diet. Take this approach slowly and cautiously, but do take it. If you simply avoid all insoluble fiber foods completely you will worsen your constipation in the long-term. By adding it gradually, safely, and in slowly increasing amounts, you'll help alleviate constipation while still keeping your gut calm and bowel motility stable. As always with IBS, avoid going to extremes, be kind and considerate to your GI tract, and it will be much more likely to return the favor to you.

~ Heather

### Next Time ~ The Rest of Our Five Constipation Frustrations!



**[Acacia Tummy Fiber - The prebiotic soluble fiber supplement that relieves both diarrhea AND constipation, and helps reduce bloating and gas!](#)**

### *About Us*

Heather & Company for IBS, LLC is dedicated to serving people with Irritable Bowel Syndrome. Our mission is to provide education, support, and products that allow people with IBS to successfully manage their symptoms through lifestyle modifications.

We offer extensive information and tangible help for IBS, including the world's **best-selling and best-reviewed books** for the disorder. We provide the internet's **top IBS web site resources**; a twice-monthly IBS Newsletter; seminars and classes; dietary brochures for patient distribution by health care professionals; **an IBS Research Library**; and Heather Cooks!, a healthy cooking show on Seattle television. Much of our work is based on Heather's development of the first and only comprehensive IBS dietary guidelines and recipes, an achievement which has earned **numerous awards and accolades** as well as

thousands of [thank you letters](#) from IBS sufferers.

Heather & Company also provides the only patient-expert moderated [IBS Message Boards](#) on the internet with forums for diet, recipes, hypnotherapy, yoga, plus Crohn's and Colitis. In addition, we support and coordinate the formation and continuation of local [in-person IBS support groups](#) across the USA, Canada, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand. We will soon have other IBS services and products available.

Our website receives nearly 3 million visits each year, and our newsletter is sent to over 35,000 people. We are regular exhibitors at the Digestive Disease Week and American Dietetic Association conferences.

Sponsorship opportunities are available for the message boards and this newsletter for companies and/or products that have been legitimately established as helpful for digestive disorders. Please [contact us](#) for information.

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