

Recipes



Below are some delicious healthy alternatives to wheat and dairy products that are quick and simple to make. See also my **Mexican bean and avocado salad** recipe from the *Survive the Summer* newsletter.

Quinoa & vegetables

Serves 4

200g quinoa
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 red pepper and 1 yellow pepper, deseeded and finely sliced
1 courgette, finally sliced
1 red onion, sliced into wedges
150g asparagus spears, halved
3 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
¼ cucumber, chopped
10 cherry tomatoes, halved
50g feta cheese
Olive oil or coconut oil
Freshly ground black pepper

Cook the quinoa in twice the amount of boiling water for about 7 to 10 minutes. Heat a char-grill pan (or a frying pan). Put some olive oil on the peppers, courgette, onion and asparagus and char-grill or fry them until soft. Strain the quinoa, add the rest of the ingredients and gently mix together. Lastly, crumble in the feta cheese, season with black pepper and serve. This can be served hot or cold.

Buckwheat pancakes

Makes 6 to 8 pancakes

50g buckwheat flour
1 medium egg
200 ml of milk (or you can substitute oat, rice or almond milk)

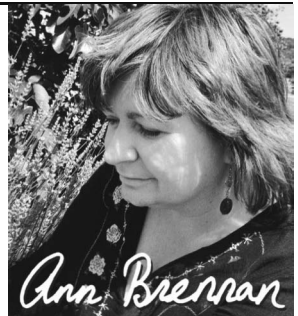
Cook as you would normal pancakes. These pancakes freeze well, just separate with layers of grease proof paper.

The buckwheat pancakes with berries make a lovely breakfast alternative to having a bowl of cereal. They are great with plain natural yogurt or some desiccated coconut. You can try a tiny pinch of cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla or fresh ginger to flavour and sweeten them up.

Savoury fillings

Instead of having a sandwich, fill the pancake with a savoury filling and have it like a panini wrap for lunch. Choose your own favourite sandwich filling or try salmon with a dollop of crème fraîche flavoured with either fresh grated ginger, mustard or horseradish with black pepper and lemon, served with salad.

WORDS free on health



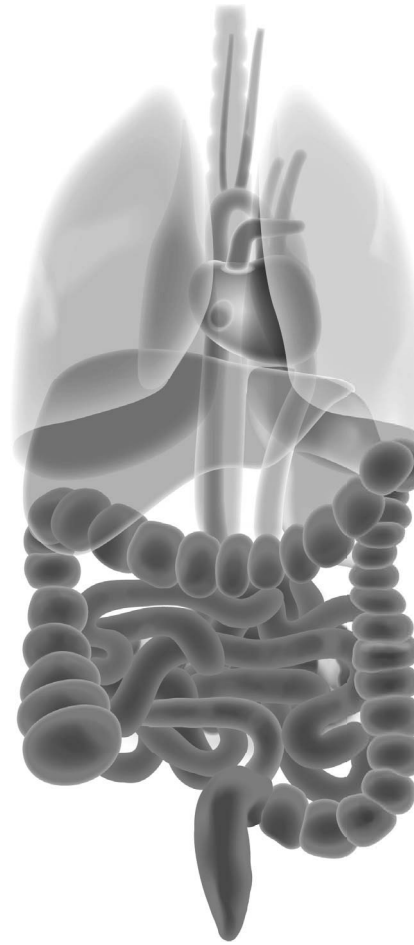
IBS

Irritable Bowel Syndrome can affect people of all ages and is one of the most common and challenging gastro-intestinal complaints seen by GPs.

Symptoms can range from mild and manageable to severe and unpredictable, causing great distress and making it hard to plan for work and social events.

In clinic, I regularly hear from sufferers how IBS impacts on their life, from having to keep to restrictive diets to pain and discomfort and the need to be near a bathroom at all times.

Fortunately, IBS responds well to herbal and nutritional medicine with its approach of trying to find the underlying cause.



continued inside



For information about herbal medicine and nutritional consultations contact Ann Brennan on 07745 898911, email ann@annbrennan.co.uk or visit my website annbrennan.co.uk.

On examination, the intestines of people with IBS appear normal. It is often called a functional disorder as the muscles in the large intestine seem to be contracting faster or slower than normal. This over-responsiveness of the bowel to stimulation by the muscles and nerves cause the characteristic symptoms of IBS.

It is thought that some of the contributing risk factors may include food intolerance (especially dairy and gluten products), poor diet, poor digestive function, food poisoning, parasitic infections, overuse of some antibiotics and prolonged periods of stress.

Gluten

I'm often asked why eating some bread or wheat products can lead to pain, bloating or wind. There could be two reasons: you may be eating grains which you can't digest easily, at least in the quantities being eaten, or the gluten content is too high. Modern wheat production methods favour a high gluten content. While this is beneficial for the manufacturers it is not such good news for the shopping public. Many people are unable to break down and digest such large amounts of gluten, causing many uncomfortable symptoms.

Conventional treatments

Commonly prescribed medicines for IBS include **tricyclic antidepressants**, such as amitriptyline, which can help to relieve pain at lower doses than normally used for depression. **Antispasmodics** such as

Symptoms of IBS

- Abdominal pain or discomfort
- Cramping pain, especially in the lower abdomen
- Bloating and wind
- Changes in bowel habits
- Diarrhoea or constipation, or bouts of both
- Urgent need to have a bowel movement
- Relief of pain after bowel movements
- Mucus in your stool
- Headaches and tiredness

Mebeverine can help reduce abdominal pain and cramping. Imodium and Lomotil are often prescribed to help in the short term with diarrhoea-type IBS. **Laxatives** are usually recommended for people with IBS-related constipation. A recent study has found **peppermint oil** to be effective in relieving some symptoms of IBS.

Conventional medical treatments can struggle to help patients with IBS as they mainly focus on symptomatic relief and can sometimes cause side effects. This often leads to feelings of hopelessness or even despair as patients feel they face a future of long-term medication with no other treatment options.

Self help

The following dietary and general advice may help, but because no two people are alike there is no single best diet or treatment plan for IBS. This is why it is always best to see a health care professional so the treatment can be tailored to your medical needs.

✓ **Eat small meals.** Instead of eating two or three large meals a day, eat several small meals.

✓ **Chew your food slowly.** This allows time for your digestive enzymes to be activated.

✓ **Regular exercise** such as walking can reduce stress and encourage bowel movements if you are constipated.

✓ **Heated packs**, hot water bottles, and long hot baths can relieve painful spasms and cramping.

✗ **Limit caffeinated drinks**, as well as alcohol and soft drinks.

✗ **Cut down on foods rich in insoluble fibre**, such as cereals containing bran.

✗ **Avoid processed foods.** Dietary changes are often hard to make and replacements for your usual diet are not always obvious. See the back of this leaflet for some alternative recipes. I can help you make a long-term diet plan which takes in to account your specific dietary needs.

Seeing a herbal practitioner

Irritable and inflammatory bowel conditions are often very complex, stemming from a variety of causes. I find the most effective way to help you achieve long term improvement is to assess, investigate and treat the many aspects of your condition. I find that each person will need a specific treatment which takes in to account their own medical history, current medication and dietary needs. The aim is to return the affected systems to normal function rather than to just relieve symptoms.

This requires taking the time to find out exactly how this condition affects your day to day life. Treatment will initially use herbal remedies to heal and adjust the affected systems, with long-term dietary changes providing the bedrock for continued relief. People with IBS are able to experience significant long-term relief by following this approach.

If you have any questions about IBS or want to discuss possible treatment plans, please contact me by phone or email – the contact details are on the front of this leaflet.