

# Health Hints

## Getting Real About the Bathroom: Tips and Resources for Managing IBS-D

(NAPSA)—For most people, going to the bathroom is a routine and uneventful experience that requires little planning. Yet for as many as 15 million Americans with Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Diarrhea (IBS-D), trying to predict when they'll need the bathroom again is a daily source of anxiety.

IBS-D, a chronic disorder characterized by diarrhea and recurring abdominal pain, gives sufferers little or no ability to predict when they'll have to run to the bathroom. Beyond the physical and emotional impact of IBS-D is the fact that this is a condition that is difficult to talk about, making it harder for those affected to receive the support and treatment they need. A recent national survey showed that those with IBS-D would feel more comfortable speaking to others about sexually transmitted diseases than about their bowel movements, and that 67 percent of IBS-D patients suffer with symptoms for at least a year before discussing their symptoms with a doctor. Shockingly, 11 percent of patients wait a decade or more before asking for medical help.

Dr. Jonathan Rosenberg, M.D., of the Illinois Gastroenterology Group, shares his top three tips for people struggling to manage their IBS-D:

### 1. Make That Appointment:

Many patients have told me that they are embarrassed to discuss their symptoms with anyone, including a health care provider (HCP). But the reality is that IBS-D is a chronic health condition—just like asthma or arthritis—and can be treated with the help of an HCP. The sooner you see an HCP about your symptoms, the faster you can reach an accurate diagnosis.

**2. Use Credible Online Resources:** I really like a new web-



**Many people with IBS-D find relief after talking to their doctors.**

site, [IBSDonTract.com](http://IBSDonTract.com), created by Allergan, which has great information and downloadable resources including a symptom tracker, self-assessment tool, and doctor discussion guide. Fill out the symptom tracker for one to two weeks and bring these materials with you to your next appointment. This should help you to have a more productive and open discussion with your physician.

**3. Open Up to Your Inner Circle:** Although IBS-D can be difficult to talk about, it can be helpful to let your closest family members, friends and colleagues know what you're going through. In addition to relieving the burden and stress of keeping your diagnosis a secret, you'll be able to rely on them for support.

To learn more about IBS-D, including signs, symptoms, tips and expert resources, visit [www.IBSDonTract.com](http://www.IBSDonTract.com).