

# IBS TREATMENT CENTER

Get out of the bathroom and get back to your life

MEMBER OF **INNATE**  
HEALTH GROUP

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## 3 Secrets About IBS at Work

Work is an essential part of life for most us, yet many people can't work, or can't work when they want to. It's not because they can't get a job or don't have the energy. They simply don't have enough control over their body to do something that everyone else takes for granted – arriving to work on time and keeping a regular schedule. For 30 million Americans, this most essential aspect of life is in jeopardy. Something as simple as getting in the car and going somewhere is an enormous challenge.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) affects a great number of people. In fact, some studies estimate that 15% of the population of the US is affected by IBS. That means 3 in twenty workers have IBS. It is the second most common reason for employees to call in sick after the common cold, with IBS patients missing an average of 13.4 days of work a year due to illness. It is such a huge problem that a 2005 study estimated that it costs US businesses well over 20 billion dollars a year in lost productivity.

If you have IBS, you know it affects your work. Marsha sure did. Marsha is a 45 year old account executive who enjoys her job, but it wasn't always that way. When she had IBS the condition ruled her life. Every morning she had a regular routine including, like most people, going to the bathroom. But her routine wasn't like most people's in that for her, going to the bathroom was a miserable two hour ordeal. For years it took Marsha two hours every morning, with multiple bowel movements and lots of pain, gas, urgency, and anxiety,

## Meet Our Physicians



Dr. Kelly Baker, ND LAc



Dr. Stephen Wangen, ND



Dr. Heath McAllister, ND

before she could start her day. She would not leave the house until she felt that she could trust her bowels to get from her house to her office.

Hoping that she wouldn't need to stop and find a bathroom, Marsha would drive to work. She knew where all of the public restrooms were on her route to work. And, like the rest of us, she knew they were not nearly as nice as the one at home – you take what you can find. Some days she didn't make it to the nearest restroom, which is why she always carried spare clothes. And let's not talk about the panic attacks along the way.

Because she knew food had something to do with how she felt, Marsha avoided breakfast altogether. No doubt you have heard it said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day? Not for Marsha. Avoiding breakfast was one of the more important things that she did to start off her day.

Once Marsha finally made it to work it was a poker game. She scheduled most of her appointments in the afternoon because she usually felt a little better then. And silly as it may seem to everyone who is healthy, it was essential to Marsha that her office was not too far from the employee restroom.

Meetings were the worst. Stuck in a room with her colleagues, she never knew if she would have to rush out without warning, or if she would pass gas, or if her stomach would make those loud rumbling noises. Any one of these things would cause significant embarrassment and shame to Marsha. She wondered what her colleagues really thought of her, and she was afraid that she would be overlooked when it came time for a promotion.

Marsha often skipped lunch too, although sometimes when the peer pressure was just too much to ignore, she would eat with rest of the group. When she did she knew that she would suffer later that afternoon, but figured she would have to eat sooner or later anyway.

Business trips were almost out of the question. She did them on occasion, but traveling was about the worst thing she could possibly imagine. Stuck in traffic, stuck in a plane, stuck in a conference or an important meeting – all is torture when you have a digestive disorder.

Marsha was so frustrated that she even considered quitting her job. When she finally confided in her best friend about her problems, her friend recommended she see a doctor. But Marsha had already been to the doctor, many times in fact. And then to a gastroenterologist. She had even had a colonoscopy. All any doctor ever said was that her tests were fine, and that she just had IBS caused by stress. Because she knew she felt worse when she was stressed (and she definitely struggled if she had to make a presentation), she figured the doctors must be right.

**Depressed and often in tears, Marsha felt isolated and alone.  
She wondered if the IBS would ever go away.**

If you have IBS you probably can empathize with Marsha's story and are likely using some of the same coping techniques as Marsha - skipping meals, avoiding travel, etc. If you are not eating to avoid digestive issues, getting up extra early to manage your bowel movements, or avoiding meetings and travel, or other standard aspects of work, then IBS is having a significant impact on your work life.

Here are **three secrets** about IBS at work:

**one: You are not alone.**

IBS affects millions of Americans. Unless you work for a very small company you probably have co-workers who have IBS. Digestive problems can be hard to talk about, but they are very common.

**two: Even if you are coping well, managing IBS is affecting your work**

Dealing with IBS is hard but many people develop coping strategies that enable them to keep working. But even if you do – you may not be as effective as you could be, and you are spending a great deal of your energy keeping it all together – instead of focusing on your work. Marsha kept her job, but was not achieving her goals like getting that promotion because her IBS was always at the top of her mind.

**three: You don't have to keep suffering with IBS**

Most people with IBS get medical care but the treatments are not solving their problem. Real help is available though. And it is possible for nearly all IBS patients to end or dramatically reduce their symptoms so they can return to normal work and life.

Most people with IBS can get better. There is usually a cause for their symptoms, and most of the time it isn't just stress. We believe that most likely you are stressed because of your condition and not the other way around.

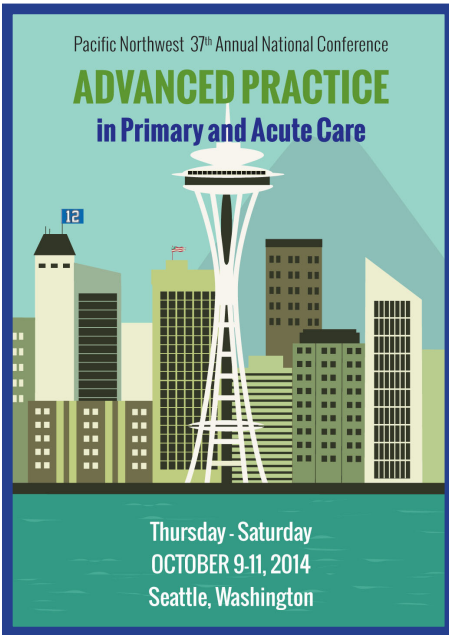
**Marsha was at the end of her rope and ready to quit her job before she finally got the right kind of specialized medical help and figured out what was causing her IBS.**

Now Marsha does not have to get up in the wee hours of the morning, and drives to work without even thinking about her digestion. The hours she spent on managing her condition are now hours filled with normal activities, like sleeping longer, working out, and having a relaxed breakfast.

She enjoys eating out with her colleagues and can travel as needed for her job. And even more exciting for Marsha, she now has confidence to share and participate in team meetings with others. She is routinely complimented for her excellent and engaging presentations, and she knows that she is a much better employee.

Employees and employers are affected by IBS. It interferes with productivity and can be emotionally devastating. You don't have to let it control your day. Getting the right help is the key to ending IBS and other disruptive digestive symptoms, and will allow you to focus on more important things.

**Getting the right help is key to ending IBS symptoms**



## Probiotics During Pregnancy and Lactation

Dr. Stephen Wangen, ND will be speaking on the topic “Probiotics and Their Use in Pregnancy and Lactation” at the Advanced Practice in Primary and Acute Care Conference presented by UW Continuing Nursing Education.

This national conference typically has an attendance around 800 and is presented primarily for nurse practitioners. Other attendees will include physicians, physician assistants, pharmacists, nurses, midwives and other interested healthcare professionals.

Conference dates: October 9-11, 2014

**Dr. Wangen to speak:** Friday, October 10, 2:45PM

Location: Washington State Convention Center, Seattle

Information: <http://www.uwcne.org/secure/display3.asp?SKU=14130-A-C>



## Gluten & Allergen Free Wellness Events

Hartford, CT                      October 5, 2014

Jacksonville, FL                November 1, 2014

*(Scheduling conflicts prevent Dr. Wangen from attending these events this year.)*

## Gluten & Allergen Free Expos

**Dr. Wangen will be speaking at:**  
Springfield, MA                October 25, 2014



For yourself or someone you know,  
Dr. Wangen’s book **Healthier Without Wheat**  
is available by calling

(206) 264-1111 or (888) 546-6283  
or at

[IBSTreatmentCenter.com](http://IBSTreatmentCenter.com)