

FUNCTIONAL IBD *healing*

IBD *flare-up* CHEAT SHEET

Struggling through an IBD flare, whether it is Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, or microscopic colitis? Just want to keep this resource in your back pocket for the future? I got you! The tips in this sheet may help you feel better and recover faster. I have accumulated these tips from years as an IBD-focused nutritionist and these have also helped me personally with Crohn's. Remember, healing is multi-faceted, and so is getting out of an IBD flare! Note that links in this document earn me income. I always only share what I believe in!

Alexa Federico WELLNESS

@girlinhealing

girlinhealing.com

diet

When it comes to diet, we want to focus on foods that are 1) easy-to-digest 2) warm 3) nourishing. Therefore, focus on well-cooked veggies, especially starchy veggies, simply cooked animal proteins, bone stock/broth and soups and stews made from it, white rice, bananas, avocado, and water with electrolytes, warm lemon water, and herbal teas like peppermint and ginger.

Everyone is different, but these foods tend to be less problematic.

It may be helpful to eat smaller meals more frequently during a flare. A liquid or semi-liquid diet may be helpful. See my note about Elemental Heal, in the next section.

Supplements

In general, cutting down supplements to the most necessary is a good approach to lower chances of GI upset. Below are the foundational supplements you may want to include. As always with supplements, it is your responsibility to check for allergens, contraindications, etc. to ensure these are right for you. This is not medical advice. Most supplements I recommend are on my Fullscript supplement store unless linked elsewhere. Create an account to shop and order. Email me alexa@girlinhealing.com if you have any questions.

A digestive enzyme. This simply supplies extra enzymes to break down food early on in the digestive process. Digestion is a north-to-south process, so dysfunction early on will impact later stages of digestion.

A healing agent. I have several in my “Healing the Gut” protocol. These are plant and herb formulations shown to improve digestive function, inflammation, and/or intestinal permeability.

A probiotic, particularly if loose bowels are a symptom in your flare. Helpful gut bacteria to the rescue!

Sometimes, a liquid or semi-liquid diet can be helpful when all foods are going through you or causing pain. My recommendation for a liquid nutrition supplement is Elemental Heal, a complete meal replacement that will support your nutritional needs in a flare, while being easy on the digestive system. As with any new food or product, begin sipping slowly, do not chug. You can read more about the ways you can use Elemental Heal in [this blog post](#). I recommend always having this in the medicine cabinet!

Electrolytes to replace minerals that are lost through loose bowel movements (and vomiting if that is occurring). A free multi-pack will be added to your first order through my link!

movement

Discontinue any intensive exercise, as this can further the stress on the body. Stick to gentle movement, like walking, stretching, yoga, light swimming, light strength training, etc. A little bit will keep your strength and energy up.

stress management

Stress is a major contributor to flare-ups, and this can come in many forms that are emotional or physical. Evaluate if there are any stressors you can minimize or stop all together. I.e. Can a partner or friend pick up your kids so you can rest? Can you have groceries delivered instead of shopping yourself? Can you decline a party invitation?

In addition, breathwork and meditation are accessible and fast-acting ways to feel changes in your body. Epsom salt baths are great ways to relax, support your magnesium levels, and support your body's natural detox process.

sleep/rest

Lack of quality and sufficient quantity of sleep is a stressor and robs the body time to reset. Frustratingly, IBD flares can disrupt sleep due to pain, bathroom trips, night sweats, etc. Do your best to clean up your sleep hygiene (no phones before bed, sleep in a cool room, make sure it is comfortable, etc.) Try listening to soothing music or a guided meditation to fall asleep to.

Naps count, so if time allows, sneaking in a 20-minute nap can be beneficial.

mindset

As much as you can, make it your mission to believe in your healing. Picture your vibrant self, strong, exercising, having limitless energy, showing up in your work, or any other visual that means to you that you are healthy and well. I believe it is important you believe this to be true to see the best results.

Your mind is leading the way for your body to follow!

all in all

Flare-ups are challenging, but you can do this!

Note: Please seek emergency medical services whenever necessary.

For more resources on eating through a flare as well as how to navigate the next seasons of health that I call, Healing, and Thriving, get my ebook, [The Complete Guide to Eating for Crohn's Disease & Ulcerative Colitis](#).