



Modernising Patient Pathway Programme

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) Pathway



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Background



Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a common condition that results in a high number of referrals to the Gastroenterology Service. Traditionally these patients are either seen in Gastroenterology clinics as a new patient or referred directly for endoscopy.

This pathway aims to give patients information on how to self-manage their condition and highlight to Primary Care the more complex cases that should be referred on to Secondary Care. It also provides an opt-in mechanism so that patients that continue to have problems can be seen at specific nurse-led clinics and so still have access to Secondary Care.

Pathway recommendations



Guidance for Primary Care

The most common symptoms of IBS are:

- abdominal pain and cramping
- change in bowel habits, such as diarrhoea, constipation or sometimes both
- bloating and swelling of your stomach
- excessive wind
- occasionally experiencing an urgent need to move your bowels (especially nocturnal)

Other less common symptoms may also be experienced, such as:

- lack of energy
- feeling sick
- heartburn

Lifestyle advice

People experiencing IBS symptoms should:

- eat a healthy, balanced diet
- stay hydrated
- exercise regularly
- manage their stress levels

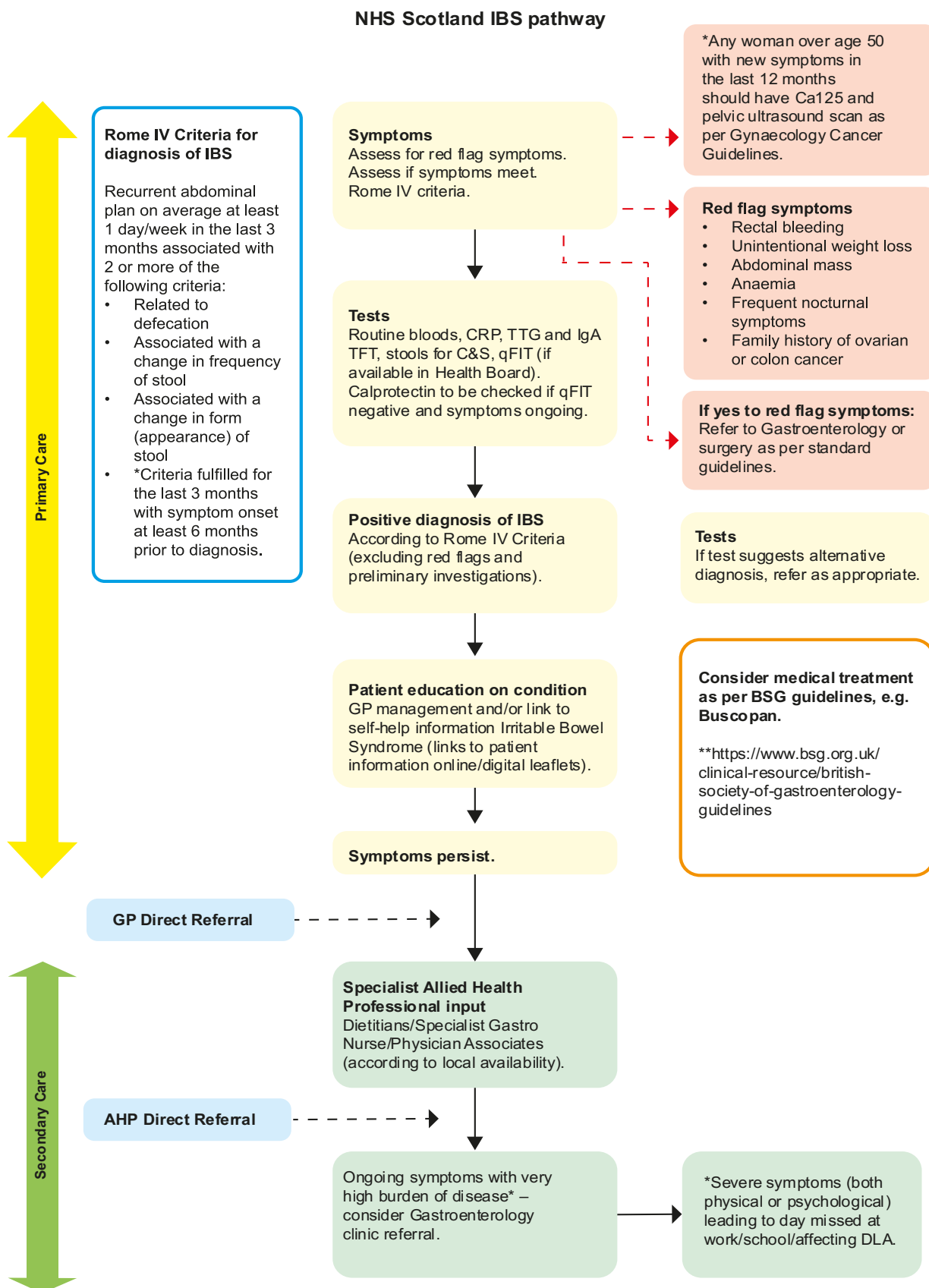
Sources of information for patients are provided on page 4 (references and further resources)

Diagnosis

The Rome IV Criteria (see flowchart diagram on page 3) should be used to exclude Coeliac Disease and Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

Treatments to try before referring

British Society of Gastroenterology guidelines on the management of irritable bowel syndrome | Gut (bmj.com)



Patient resources

- [ibs-food-fact-sheet-bda.pdf \(scot.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Irritable bowel syndrome \(IBS\) | NHS inform](#)
- [Irritable Bowel Syndrome | Causes, Symptoms & Treatment | Guts UK \(gutscharity.org.uk\)](#)

References

- [Irritable bowel syndrome | Health topics A to Z | CKS | NICE](#)
- [British Society of Gastroenterology guidelines on the management of irritable bowel syndrome - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)
- [Rome IV Criteria - Rome Foundation \(theromefoundation.org\)](#)
- [Lower Gastrointestinal Cancer \(scot.nhs.uk\)](#)



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