

tions, cautions, seasonal guides (ie, when an ingredient is available seasonally), and guidelines for selection and storage.

I love the book's extra goodies: sidebars, tips, flash facts, charts, and warnings. Its format is easy to navigate (clear, large headers abound), or you can find any issue-du-jour in the extensive index. The glossary is particularly helpful to new moms, and the excellent resource section is a well-researched addition.

The authors dig deep into controversial issues, such as using soy formula and soy foods, the safety of plastic bottles, organic foods, and homemade vs. commercial baby food. Facts are well referenced, originating largely from the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Dietetic Association, FDA, USDA, journal articles, and other books. However, it is often clear which side the authors are taking with controversial topics; as such, the references cited are rather selective in order to support their opinion.

If you work with parents or caregivers, you will find yourself flipping through this book time and again, especially for the handy charts. It doesn't necessarily offer a lot of new information to a seasoned RD, but it would serve as a handy reference. I recommend this book to any mom wanting to give her baby the best nutritional start.

— Dina Aronson, MS, RD, owns Welltech Solutions, a nutrition and technology consulting company.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Eating Well With IBS

By Kate Scarlata, RD, LDN

2010, Alpha

Softcover, 336 pages, \$18.95

For the estimated one in five Americans with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), everyday life involves challenges such as dealing with painful gas and bloating, running to the bathroom, and making safe food choices. IBS is a mysterious condition that scientists don't fully understand; it doesn't present a neat set of consistent symptoms, and diagnosis is typically a result of ruling out other possible conditions. No wonder there is so much confusion, frustration, and misinformation surrounding IBS.

That's why *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Eating Well With IBS* is such a welcome addition to today's archive of health and wellness references. Scarlata, a Boston-based dietitian in private practice, has the ideal background to pen a practical book on navigating diet and IBS. Not only is she a dietitian, but she also has the condition herself. Based on her knowledge and personal experience, she set out to help people with IBS understand and successfully manage the condition's often disabling symptoms.

The book begins with a thorough explanation of IBS—from its myriad symptoms to the importance of getting an appropriate diagnosis that rules out other possible conditions. Then Scarlata introduces the major food categories that can impact or trigger IBS symptoms. She explores the category of potentially troublesome carbohydrates that includes lactose, fructose, FODMAPs, and fiber and offers practical tips on how to safely and nutritiously navigate these food sources. Next, Scarlata discusses the significance of moderate fat intake to avoid excessive stimulation of the gastrocolic reflex. She also explores the power of possible food intolerances or allergies, such as gluten sensitivity or histamine intolerance, which might produce or aggravate gastrointestinal symptoms. The author encourages people with IBS to use a food diary to help them keep track of foods that might trigger symptoms. One chapter is dedicated to “the best digestion lifestyle”; in this, Scarlata paints a picture of what an overall eating plan for good digestive health looks like, including strategies such as maintaining regular mealtimes, eating small portions, and avoiding excessive alcohol and caffeine intake. In addition, she covers probiotics as a method to help promote healthy gut bacteria and better immune health.

Scarlata's sharp dietitian focus helps set *Eating Well With IBS* apart from other books written on chronic health conditions. Throughout the book, she encourages readers to consider their overall nutritional intake. For example, for readers who are lactose intolerant, she provides information on getting adequate calcium and vitamin D in the diet. And when Scarlata pushes people with IBS to watch their fat intake, she also gives them a mini lesson on healthful and not-so-healthful fats for heart health. She takes diet recommendations from theory into practice by offering tips for eating out and a collection of recipes based on the eating plan she lays out.

If you're seeing an increasing number of patients with IBS in your practice, *Eating Well With IBS* might become one of your favorite go-to books on your shelf.

— Sharon Palmer, RD, is a contributing editor at *Today's Dietitian* and a freelance food and nutrition writer based in southern California.

