

Breath test may help diagnose irritable bowel syndrome

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There is currently no specific diagnostic test for irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), but now researchers have identified a combination of 16 different substances in the breath that, when measured together, can accurately distinguish IBS patients from people without the condition.

Investigators analyzed [breath samples](#) from 170 IBS patients and 153 healthy controls, as well as 1307 participants in the [general population](#). The set of 16 substances correctly predicted 89.4% of the IBS patients and 73.3% of the healthy controls.

Furthermore, the results of the breath test were particularly abnormal when patients' intestinal symptoms were most severe.

"Now we know which chemicals in breath have diagnostic information that we can use to develop noninvasive tools to follow the disease and to steer therapeutic interventions," said Prof. Frederik-Jan van Schooten, senior author of the *Alimentary Pharmacology and Therapeutics* study. "This will definitely make a difference in quality of life for patients suffering from this functional gastrointestinal disorder."

Provided by Wiley

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