

Teen IBS School-Day Route Card

Use this with a parent, caregiver, school nurse, counselor, or clinician. It is not a diagnosis tool.

1. Stop signs

Ask for medical help instead of only adjusting school routines if symptoms include blood or black stool, fever, repeated vomiting, dehydration signs, severe or worsening pain, nighttime diarrhea, unexplained weight loss, fainting, or symptoms that feel clearly different from the usual pattern.

2. Bathroom access plan

- Who can the teen ask for a pass without explaining symptoms in front of the class?
- Is there a private or predictable bathroom option?
- What is the backup plan during tests, assemblies, bus rides, or practice?
- Where can supplies be kept discreetly?

3. Meal and hydration plan

- Keep breakfast and lunch familiar on high-stakes days.
- Track caffeine, sugar alcohols, very fatty meals, skipped meals, and rushed eating.
- Bring a water bottle when allowed.
- Do not start a restrictive diet without medical and dietitian guidance.

4. Stress and attendance support

- Symptoms are real even when stress makes them louder.
- Choose one trusted adult at school.
- Track missed classes, nurse visits, bathroom urgency, and what helps the day continue.

5. Clinician prep

Bring: symptom timing, stool pattern, pain location, red flags, growth or weight concerns, medications, supplements, menstrual-cycle timing if relevant, anxiety/stress context, and school-day limits.