

# Gut-Brain Pain Next-Step Guide

Use this one-page guide when abdominal pain keeps dominating after food or bowel-pattern work only partly helps.

## Start With Safety

Get medical help promptly if pain is new, severe, progressive, or paired with:

- ? blood or black stool
- ? fever
- ? persistent vomiting
- ? unexplained weight loss
- ? fainting or dehydration
- ? chest pain

## If the Pattern Is Familiar but Amplified

Ask which driver is loudest:

Driver	Likely next route
Stress-sensitive bloating	Stress and Bloating Through the Gut-Brain Axis
Pain that feels amplified	Stress, Sex, and Chronic Visceral Pain
Anxiety or low mood in the loop	IBS, Anxiety, and Depression
IBS-D urgency	Serotonin and IBS-D
Persistent pain despite basics	IBS Treatment Options
Therapy-specific question	Gut-Directed Hypnotherapy for IBS

## Questions for a Clinician or Therapist

- ? Does this look like visceral hypersensitivity?
- ? Are gut-directed therapies a reasonable next step?
- ? Should neuromodulator options be discussed?
- ? Are there hormone, cycle, sleep, or stress patterns worth tracking?
- ? What symptoms would change the plan from self-management to evaluation?