



Press release

Date: 23 March 2017

Promoting IBS Awareness Month in April

Throughout April, The IBS Network, the national charity that supports people living with Irritable Bowel Syndrome, will be promoting IBS Awareness Month. By talking openly about this debilitating long-term condition, the charity aims to encourage more research, improve education and promote effective self-management for those with IBS. At any one time, the illness affects between 10-20% of the UK population, or approximately 12 million people and is believed to cost the NHS £200m annually.*

To mark IBS Awareness Month, the charity is offering the first 100 people who sign up to become members of The IBS Network in April the chance to receive a free Radar Key.**

To join, call 0114 272 3253 or [visit our website](#). Members benefit from accessing advice from specialist IBS medical professionals via the helpline and online, use of the IBS Self-Care Programme and symptom tracker as well as a 'Can't Wait' card, including an International travel card, factsheets, specialist recipes and ongoing support.

Alison Reid, CEO of The IBS Network says:

"IBS is a complex and life-changing condition, which can cause abdominal pain, bloating, constipation, diarrhoea and a range of other symptoms. There is no definite cause and no single treatment for IBS. Through supporting healthcare professionals and helping those with the condition, people can learn to live well again. We want to highlight the illness and break the 'poo taboo.' Most people with IBS have a sensitive gut and symptoms can be

triggered by stress, as well as diet, mood, or lifestyle changes. It can lead to feelings of isolation and cause major problems in people's working and personal lives. However, given the right support and guidance, people can help relieve their symptoms through self-management although this is not a quick and simple process."

In advance of IBS Awareness Month, The IBS Network recently announced the appointment of Thomas Redgrave from Collabro, the world's most successful musical theatre group and previous Britain's Got Talent winners, as its Charity Ambassador.

Commenting on his decision to take on the role of Ambassador, Thomas said:

"Having had IBS since I was a child, I know the impact it has long-term on so many people's lives. I came forward as an Ambassador for The IBS Network to talk openly about my experiences, increase awareness of IBS, help the charity raise much needed funds and to break the taboo surrounding the condition."

For more details about the condition and for help and advice go to www.theibsnetwork.org

References:

*Canavan C, West J and Card T, (2014) Review article, The economic impact of IBS. *Alimentary Pharmacology and Therapeutics* 40 (9) 1023-34.

**Offer only includes membership subscriptions paid in one instalment and excludes those paying by monthly Direct Debit.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

If you would like any further information on Irritable Bowel Syndrome, or would like to speak to a medical professional or someone with the condition – please email jo@theibsnetwork.org

About The IBS Network

The IBS Network is the national charity that helps people with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and has provided support to those with the condition and to healthcare professionals for over 25 years. Funding for the charity is received from a number of sources, including:

annual memberships, an online shop for purchasing the 'Can't Wait' card, Radar keys and other useful aids, in addition to income from legacies. The charity does not receive any Government or NHS funding.

At any one time, IBS affects around 10-20% of people living in the UK, which equates to approximately 12 million people. The illness is used to describe a collection of otherwise unexplained symptoms relating to a disturbance in the bowels, which can include abdominal pain, bloating, constipation and diarrhoea.

For more information, please visit the charity's [website](#) or email info@theibsnetwork.org

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