

FEELGUT FACTOR

£2 probiotic drink to beat bowel hell

BY DANNY BUCKLAND
news@mirror.co.uk

A PROBIOTIC drink costing £2-a-day could save the NHS millions and improve the lives of irritable bowel syndrome sufferers.

Up to 12 million Brits struggle with stomach cramps and bloating caused by the condition, and its treatment places a huge burden on the NHS.

But figures released today claim a barley-based drink that attacks harmful stomach bacteria can help.

Top digestion doc Professor Ingvar Bjarnason, who carried out the clinical

trials, said 60% of IBS sufferers found their symptoms were eased after taking Symprove.

He said: "This is a real breakthrough and patients showed a marked improvement in their lifestyle

"It had a most profound impact and for the first time ever we saw people becoming symptom-free and that is very exciting."

About 70% of IBS patients are women who suffer in silence because of a lack of effective treatments. Hospital visits can involve invasive treatments that cost the NHS £3,000 each and often do not find a cause or

► **GUT FEELING** Prof Bjarnason

successful medication. Prof Bjarnason, of King's College Hospital, London, said: "The financial cost of IBS is horrendous. Apart from the misery it causes patients, it is one of the top causes of absenteeism.

"IBS causes cramping abdominal pains, bloating and bowel problems and is up there with back pain as the biggest cause of time off work and it costs us £40million a year."

Trials on the drink, made by a UK firm by growing bacteria on barley, are to be extended to include the digestive condition colitis.

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