



HEALTH INFORMATION

Crohn's Disease



What is Crohn's disease?

Crohn's disease is a form of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). It usually affects the intestines, but may occur anywhere from the mouth to the end of the rectum.

What causes Crohn's disease

The exact cause of Crohn's disease is unknown. It is an autoimmune disorder. An autoimmune disorder is a condition that occurs when your body's immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys healthy body tissue.

People with Crohn's disease have ongoing inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract. Crohn's disease may involve the small intestine, the large intestine, or the rectum. The inflammation causes the intestinal wall to become thick. There are different types of Crohn's disease. The type depends on what part of your body is affected. Crohn's disease may occur at any age. It usually occurs in people between ages 15 - 35.

Symptoms

Symptoms depend on what part of the gastrointestinal tract is affected. Symptoms range from mild to severe, and can come and go with periods of flare-ups.

The main symptoms of Crohn's disease are:

- Crampy abdominal pain
- Fever, Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Pain with passing stool
- Diarrhoea
- Weight loss
- Rectal bleeding

Treatment

DIET AND NUTRITION

You should eat a well-balanced, healthy diet. It is important to get enough calories, protein, and essential nutrients from a variety of food groups.

No specific diet has been shown to make Crohn's symptoms better or worse. Specific food problems may vary from person to person.

However, certain types of foods can make diarrhoea and gas worse.

To help ease symptoms, try:

- Eating small amounts of food throughout the day
- Drinking lots of water
- Avoiding high-fibre foods
- Avoiding fatty, greasy or fried foods
- Limiting dairy products if you have problems digesting dairy fats

Surgery

If medicines do not work, a type of surgery called bowel resection may be needed to remove a damaged or diseased part of the intestine or to drain an abscess.

However, removing the diseased portion of the intestine does not cure the condition.

Some patients may need surgery to remove the entire large intestine with or without the rectum.

Medications

you can take medication to treat very bad diarrhoea.

Loperamide can be bought without a prescription.

Always talk to your doctor or nurse before using these drugs.

Your doctor may also give you a prescription for stronger pain medicines.

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