

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)



Overview

This is a label given to certain conditions that cause problems with your gastrointestinal tract. With IBD, your intestines become irritated and inflamed. This gets worse over time. Ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease are the most common forms of IBD.

Causes

Inflammatory bowel disease is often linked to the immune system. Your immune system's role is to protect your body from things that can harm you. But in many people who have IBD, the immune system becomes confused by things in the intestines, such as helpful bacteria and food. The immune system attacks the lining of the intestines. This causes inflammation and sores.

Symptoms

IBD can cause severe and disruptive problems. You may have frequent diarrhea. You may have cramps and pain in your abdomen. You may have bloody stools. You may lose your appetite, which leads to weight loss. You may feel fatigued.

Treatment

Treatment options depend on your type of IBD. You may benefit from medications. You may benefit from changes to your diet and to your lifestyle. You may benefit from a surgical procedure. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.

