

Crohn's disease: management

Information for the public

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Crohn's disease: the care you should expect

Crohn's disease is a lifelong condition that causes inflammation in parts of the digestive system (most commonly in the small intestine). It can cause symptoms like diarrhoea, abdominal pain, tiredness and weight loss. Symptoms usually come and go – they may flare up before easing off again for a few weeks or months. There is no cure for Crohn's disease, so the aim of treatment is to get good control over symptoms to help people have the best quality of life they can.

We want this guideline to make a difference to people with Crohn's disease by making sure:

- doctors know which drug treatments work best to treat flare ups, and how to prevent future flare-ups
- your doctor explains the pros and cons of different drug treatments, including any side effects, so you can decide what's right for you
- your doctor involves you in decisions about how to manage your condition between flare-ups.

Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your healthcare professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

To help you make decisions, think about:

- What matters most to you – what do you want to get out of any treatments?
- What are you most worried about – are there risks or downsides to the treatments that worry you more than others?
- How will the condition and its treatment affect your day to day life?
- What happens if you don't want to have treatment?

If you can't understand the information you are given, tell your healthcare professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Where can I find out more?

The [NHS website](#) has more information about Crohn's disease.

The organisations below can give you more advice and support.

- [Crohn's and Colitis UK](#), 0300 222 5700
- [Crohn's in Childhood Research Association \(CICRA\)](#), 020 8949 6209
- [IA \(the ileostomy and internal pouch support group\)](#), 0800 0184 724

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with people who have been affected by Crohn's disease and staff who treat and support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

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