

# *Baritz* Wellness Center, P.C.

450 Pleasant Street, Brockton, MA 02301 • 508 583-2565 • [www.baritzwellness.com](http://www.baritzwellness.com)

## Inflammatory Bowel Disease

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Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is a group of diseases that includes Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. The goal of medical treatment of IBD is to suppress inflammation.

Crohn's disease (CD) causes inflammation of the digestive system and can affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract from the mouth to the anus. It often affects the lower part of the small intestine called the ileum. It can occur in people of all age groups but is most often diagnosed in young adults. Common symptoms are pain in the abdomen and diarrhea. Bleeding from the rectum, weight loss, joint pain, skin problems and fever may also occur. Children with the disease may have growth problems. Other problems can include intestinal blockage and malnutrition.

Ulcerative colitis (UC) is a disease that causes ulcers in the lining of the rectum and colon. Ulcerative colitis can happen at any age, but it usually starts between the ages of 15 and 30. The most common symptoms are abdominal pain and bloody diarrhea. Other symptoms may include anemia, severe tiredness, weight loss, loss of appetite, bleeding from the rectum, sores on the skin and joint pain. Children with the disease may have growth problems.

### Complications

There are more than 100 complications of IBD that reach outside of the GI tract. The most common is arthritis which occurs in 25% adults with IBD. Arthritis can affect the knees, ankles, wrists, and/or spine. Other complications are skin problems, inflammation of the mouth, liver disease, thrombophlebitis (inflammatory blood clots), finger clubbing, eye inflammation, gallstones, kidney stones, malnutrition, weight loss, anemia, and in children failure to grow, thrive and mature normally. Documented nutritional deficiencies include iron, B6, folate, magnesium, potassium, retinol, ascorbate, vitamin D, zinc, vitamin K, copper, niacin, vitamin E, and trace minerals.

The goal of medical treatment is to suppress inflammation, and the primary drugs used are corticosteroids (cortisone & prednisone) and sulfa based antibiotics (Sulfasalazine). Known complications of corticosteroids are: breakdown of the protean structures of the body, depressed protein synthesis; decreased absorption of calcium and phosphorus; increased excretion of ascorbic acid, calcium, potassium and zinc; increased blood glucose, triglycerides and cholesterol; increased need for vitamins B6, C, folate and D; decreased bone formation; and slower wound healing. Known complications of Sulfasalazine include decreased serum folate, decreased iron and increased urinary excretion of ascorbic acid.

### Causes

Although the cause of IBD is officially listed as "unknown", there are several clues:

- Genetic predisposition: There is strong evidence for a genetic predisposition as it tends to run in families.
- Antibiotic exposure: There has been an epidemic-like increase in countries after extensive antibiotics use.
- Western Diet: Crohn's disease continues to increase in populations consuming a Western diet and is virtually non-existent in populations consuming a primitive diet.
- Too much stress: Mental and emotional factors are known to promote exacerbations of IBD.
- Reduced intake of Omega-3 oils and increase consumption of red meat has been linked to a rise of CD in Japan.

### Natural therapy

For more information on natural approaches see Health Tips "Inflammatory Status", "Inflammation" and "Inflammation, The Program".

***To have a custom program created for you or for a free consult call 508 583-2565***

***\*\*To view this and other health tips go to [www.baritzwellness.com](http://www.baritzwellness.com) and select the Health Tips tab\*\****

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