



Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) is a group of disorders in which areas of the digestive track become inflamed (red and swollen). Symptoms include severe or chronic abdominal pain, diarrhea, unexplained weight loss, loss of appetite, rectal bleeding, skin problems, and/or fever. The most common forms of IBD are ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.

According to the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, while the symptoms of Crohn's and ulcerative colitis are quite similar, the areas affected in the gastrointestinal tract are different. Crohn's most commonly affects the end of the small bowel and the beginning of the colon, but it may affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract, from the mouth to the anus. Ulcerative colitis is limited to the colon, also called the large intestine.

In 2015, the Center for Disease Control estimated 1.3% of US adults (3 million) reported being diagnosed with IBD. While the exact cause of IBD is unknown, IBD is the result of a defective immune system. Those with IBD have an immune system which responds incorrectly to environmental triggers, causing inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract. There also appears to be a genetic component—someone with a family history of IBD is more likely to develop this inappropriate immune response.

At Midwest Gastrointestinal Associates, PC (MGI) our physicians treat IBD with various types of medications, such as corticosteroids, antibiotics, and immunomodulators. However, not all patients respond to these medications. In these instances, biologic therapies may be recommended.

In addition to medications, MGI has nurses, case managers, a dietitian and infusion facilities to assist our growing population of IBD patients. Diet and nutrition are also important factors in managing IBD. While there is no evidence of a particular diet for IBD, patients should work closely with their physician, nurse and dietitian for recommendations to ease symptoms.

MGI has also partnered with the physicians of Colon and Rectal Surgery Inc to create The Nebraska Crohn's and Colitis Center of Excellence to seek better outcome in IBD care. The Center combines the expertise of gastroenterologists, colorectal surgeons, pathologists, nutritionists and case managers. Together these specialists work toward better diagnosis and treatment for IBD patients by providing comprehensive care.

The Crohn's and Colitis Foundation plays an important role in IBD care at Midwest Gastrointestinal Associates, PC. Locally, MGI partners with the Foundation for patient education and community events such as Take Steps. On a national level, MGI is partnering with the Foundation and other IBD institutions in the development of an IBD platform called Qorus.

For more information, visit midwestgi.com. To establish care with one of our board certified gastroenterologists, call 402-397-7057 for an appointment.