



CROHN'S DISEASE

Bromley Well

HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated July 2024

What is Crohn's Disease?

Crohn's disease is a type of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD). It is a lifelong condition that causes inflammation in parts of the bowel. It can lead to ulcers throughout the gastrointestinal tract, bowel perforation or holes in the bowel, fistulas and other complications.

What are the symptoms?

- Diarrhoea
- Stomach aches and cramps
- Blood in your poo
- Fatigue
- Weight loss
- Abnormal balance of gut bacteria which can originate with a previous stomach bug.

What are the causes?

The exact cause is not known but there are a few factors that can play a role and increase risk:

- Family history
- Ethnicity
- Autoimmunity
- Environmental factors such as cigarette smoke and pollution

What about treatment?

- Steroids to reduce inflammation.
- Medicine to stop inflammation returning.
- Surgery to remove part of the digestive system that is damaged.
- Alterations to diet e.g. many people with Crohn's find that less spicy or lower fibre food can help with flare ups.

References: NHS Condition: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/crohns-disease/>
Crohn's and Colitis UK <https://crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/>

SELF CARE TIPS

DON'T SMOKE

Those who have Crohn's and smoke are more likely to have disease complications and higher risk surgeries.

DRINK IN MODERATION

Alcohol may interfere with your medication but it also irritates the lining of your bowel which can make symptoms worse.

INCREASE HYDRATING FLUID INTAKE

You are more likely to be dehydrated if you have Crohn's as your digestive system does not absorb as much water and it is lost in your stool.

EXERCISE REGULARLY

Exercise can help with digestion function but also decrease stress. Resistance training also decreases risk of Osteoporosis which can be a complication of Crohn's.

FIND SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups can provide understanding and reassurance that people may not be able to get from family and friends.

To register with Bromley Well:

Freephone 0808 278 7898

Or register online:

www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer

Contact Lifestyle Support direct

07985 431484 / 07985 444210

or email

enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk



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FURTHER RESOURCES

<p><u>Crohn's and Colitis UK</u></p> <p>Helpline 0300 222 5700</p>	<p>Charity for those with Crohn's and Colitis, providing support such as a helpline, local support services, online social events and getting can't wait cards to allow access to public toilets.</p>
<p><u>Crohn's and Colitis Foundation</u></p>	<p>Free educational booklets.</p>
<p><u>Guts UK Factsheet</u></p>	<p>Factsheet on Crohn's Disease from Guts UK who are a charity that raise awareness on all things related on the digestive system.</p>
<p><u>NHS information sheet</u></p>	<p>Information regarding Crohn's Disease from the NHS website, going through diagnosis, symptoms and treatments etc.</p>

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