

What to Know About **Crohn's Disease and Colitis**



Observed in early December, Crohn's & Colitis Awareness Week sheds light on inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Learn more about these chronic conditions and how to improve your health.

Symptoms of Crohn's Disease and Colitis

Affecting the intestines, IBD causes many **unwanted symptoms**, such as:

- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Rectal bleeding
- Vomiting
- Weight loss



Why Symptoms Flare Up

Symptoms of Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis typically come and go, and they may be mild or severe. **You may experience flare-ups due to the following:**



Missing doses

Skipping a day of IBD medication can lead to a flare-up of symptoms.



Stress or smoking

Stress can worsen IBD symptoms, and smoking can increase the possibility of a flare-up in Crohn's disease.



Taking certain medications

You may have a flare-up if you take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or antibiotics.

Managing the Disease

While there is no cure for Crohn's disease or colitis, proper care can help reduce symptoms and inflammation.

Treatment options include:



Biologic therapy

Medications containing lab-created antibodies lower your immune response to keep specific proteins from causing inflammation.

Diet

Focusing on nutrient-dense foods and avoiding trigger foods can help control symptoms.

Surgery

Removal or widening of the intestine are common surgical procedures used to improve the health of the intestinal tract and symptoms.

**Want help managing your intestinal health?
Find a provider at weillcornell.org/doctors**