

understanding your medications

Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis

Getting a diagnosis can be overwhelming, especially if you need complicated care. Along with good nutrition, taking your prescribed medication as directed is an important part of a successful treatment plan. Navigating the ins and outs of your specialty medication can be difficult, but our care team is there for you every step of the way. **Our pharmacists are available 24/7 to answer questions and to help you get the most out of your medication.**

Both Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are chronic, autoimmune conditions. Autoimmune conditions happen when your immune system mistakenly attacks some of your own cells, causing damage. Autoimmune conditions can happen in any part of the body, but in Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, your immune system mistakenly attacks the cells in your gastrointestinal (GI) tract, causing inflammation, swelling, and painful ulcers. This results in stomach or abdominal pain, bloating, and diarrhea.

All of the medications used to treat Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis work by either targeting the cells that are wrongly attacking your GI tract or decreasing the inflammation that happens after the attack. Below you will find some helpful facts and tips about the medications you might be taking.

Biologics

Medication Name	How Med Is Given	Common Side Effects	Ways To Lessen Side Effects
Remicade® Avsola™ Inflectra® Renflexis™	Injected into a vein through an IV infusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abdominal pain Cough Headache Elevated liver enzymes Heartburn Infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. You will need to have a healthcare professional give you each dose of this medication. Make sure to follow all of the instructions that they give you to prepare for each dose. Make sure to keep all of your appointments for lab tests—these will check to make sure that the medication isn't causing any liver problems.
Cimzia® (certolizumab pegol)	Injected into the skin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick.
Entyvio® (vedolizumab)	Injected into a vein through an IV infusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint pain Headache Tiredness Infection Depression Nausea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure to inject yourself in a different spot each time – don't inject into the same area over and over again. Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that's right for you.
Humira® (adalimumab)	Injected into the skin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headache Rash Pain or redness at the injection site Infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure to inject yourself in a different spot each time – don't inject into the same area over and over again. Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick.

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Simponi® or Simponi® Aria (golimumab)	Injected into the skin or injected into a vein through an IV infusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick.
Stelara® (ustekinumab)	Injected into the skin or injected into a vein through an IV infusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick.
Xeljanz® (tofacitinib)	By mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection • Sore throat • Rash • Headache 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that's right for you.
Zeposia® (ozanimod)	By mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevated liver enzymes • Infection • Headache 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice good hand hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Make sure to keep all of your appointments for lab tests - these will check to make sure that the medication isn't causing any liver problems • Use an over-the-counter (OTC) pain reliever. Make sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist to see which OTC pain reliever is right for you.

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Anti-Inflammatory Medications

These medications work by blocking the chemicals in the body that are released when the immune system attacks. These chemicals lead to the inflammation and swelling that cause damage to the GI tract in Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

Medication Name	How Med Is Given	Common Side Effects	Ways To Lessen Side Effects
Apriso® Pentasa® Delzicol® Lialda® Asacol® HD Rowasa® Canasa® (mesalamine)	By mouth, rectal suppository, rectal enema	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sore throat • Headache • Fatigue • Dizziness • Constipation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an over-the-counter (OTC) pain reliever. Make sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist to see which OTC pain reliever is right for you. • Eating a variety of healthy foods will help you get all of the vitamins and minerals that you need to feel your best.
Azulfidine® (sulfasalazine)	By mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea • Vomiting • Headache • Weight loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an over-the-counter (OTC) pain reliever. Make sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist to see which OTC pain reliever is right for you. • Eating a variety of healthy foods will help you get all of the vitamins and minerals that you need to feel your best. • Eating small, frequent meals throughout the day can help limit nausea. • Avoiding fried or greasy foods can limit nausea and vomiting.
Entocort® EC Uceris® (budesonide)	By mouth, rectal foam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Irritability • Weight gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating a variety of healthy foods will help you get all of the vitamins and minerals that you need to feel your best. • Use an over-the-counter (OTC) pain reliever. Make sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist to see which OTC pain reliever is right for you.
Prednisone/ Prednisolone Betamethasone Methyl-prednisolone	By mouth or injected into the vein through an IV infusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritability • Weight gain • High blood sugar • High blood pressure • High cholesterol • Insomnia • Low bone density 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating a variety of healthy foods will help you get all of the vitamins and minerals that you need to feel your best. • Try to avoid eating foods that are very sugary or salty (learn how to read a nutrition facts label in the Tools and Resources). • Include calcium and vitamin D food sources.