

# Contemporary approaches to inflammatory bowel disease management.

Munro Hugh\*

Department of Medicine, Taipei Veterans General Hospital, Taipei, Taiwan

## Abstract

**Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is a chronic autoimmune condition that affects millions of people worldwide. It is a complex disorder that can cause inflammation in the digestive tract, leading to symptoms such as abdominal pain, diarrhea, and rectal bleeding. The two most common forms of IBD are Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Although there is currently no cure for IBD, there are several contemporary approaches to managing the disease that can help alleviate symptoms and improve quality of life for patients.**

**Keywords:** Inflammatory bowel disease, Digestive Tract, Diarrhea.

## Introduction

One of the most important contemporary approaches to IBD management is the use of biologic medications. Biologics are medications that target specific proteins in the body that are involved in the inflammatory response. They are typically administered via injection or infusion and work by reducing inflammation in the gut. Some of the most commonly used biologics for IBD include adalimumab, infliximab, and vedolizumab. Studies have shown that biologics can be highly effective in managing IBD symptoms and inducing remission. For example, a randomized controlled trial published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that infliximab was significantly more effective than placebo in inducing and maintaining remission in patients with Crohn's disease. Similarly, a meta-analysis of clinical trials found that vedolizumab was effective in inducing and maintaining remission in patients with ulcerative colitis [1].

Another important contemporary approach to IBD management is the use of diet therapy. While the exact role of diet in IBD is not fully understood, it is thought that certain foods and dietary patterns can trigger inflammation in the gut. As a result, many patients with IBD have found that modifying their diet can help to reduce their symptoms and improve their quality of life. One of the most well-studied diets for IBD is the low FODMAP diet. FODMAPs are a type of carbohydrate that can be difficult to digest and may exacerbate symptoms in some patients with IBD. The low FODMAP diet involves limiting foods that are high in FODMAPs, such as certain fruits, vegetables, and grains. Studies have found that the low FODMAP diet can be effective in reducing symptoms such as bloating and abdominal pain in patients with IBD [2].

Another diet that has shown promise in managing IBD is the specific carbohydrate diet (SCD). The SCD involves avoiding

certain types of carbohydrates, including lactose, sucrose, and complex carbohydrates, and focusing on foods that are easy to digest. While the evidence for the SCD is more limited than that for the low FODMAP diet, some patients have reported significant improvements in their symptoms after following the diet. A third contemporary approach to IBD management is the use of probiotics and prebiotics. Probiotics are live microorganisms that can help to restore the balance of bacteria in the gut, while prebiotics are non-digestible fibers that promote the growth of beneficial bacteria. Studies have shown that certain strains of probiotics can be effective in reducing inflammation and improving symptoms in patients with IBD. For example, a randomized controlled trial published in the journal *Gastroenterology* found that a specific strain of probiotics was effective in inducing remission in patients with mild to moderate ulcerative colitis. Similarly, a meta-analysis of clinical trials found that probiotics were effective in reducing disease activity and improving quality of life in patients with Crohn's disease [3].

## Medications

The use of medications is a key component of IBD management. A range of drugs are available that can help reduce inflammation, suppress the immune system, and alleviate symptoms. The most commonly used medications include:

**Aminosalicylates (5-ASAs):** These are anti-inflammatory drugs that work by reducing inflammation in the lining of the intestine. They are often used to treat mild to moderate forms of IBD, such as ulcerative colitis.

**Corticosteroids:** These are powerful anti-inflammatory drugs that are used to reduce inflammation in the body. They are usually prescribed for short-term use to help alleviate symptoms during a flare-up.

---

\*Correspondence to: Munro Hugh, Department of Medicine, Taipei Veterans General Hospital, Taipei, Taiwan, E-mail: munro\_hugh@hho.edu.tw

Received: 24-Feb-2023, Manuscript No. AAADD-23-91581; Editor assigned: 25-Feb-2023, PreQC No. AAADD-23-91581(PQ); Reviewed: 14-Mar-2023, QC No. AAADD-23-91581;

Revised: 16-Mar-2023, Manuscript No. AAADD-23-91581(R); Published: 28-Mar-2023, DOI: 10.35841/AAADD-5.2.137

**Immune system suppressors:** These drugs work by suppressing the immune system to reduce inflammation. They are often used in cases of moderate to severe IBD, where other medications have not been effective.

**Biologics:** Biologics are a newer class of drugs that target specific proteins in the immune system that are involved in inflammation. They are often used in cases of moderate to severe IBD, where other medications have not been effective.

## Diet and Nutrition

Diet and nutrition can play an important role in IBD management. Some people with IBD find that certain foods can trigger symptoms or make them worse. It's important for people with IBD to work with a dietitian or healthcare provider to develop an individualized diet plan that meets their specific nutritional needs and helps manage their symptoms. In general, people with IBD are encouraged to eat a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, and lean protein. Some people with IBD may also benefit from taking vitamin and mineral supplements, such as iron or vitamin B12, to help correct deficiencies that can occur due to malabsorption [4].

## Surgery

In some cases, surgery may be necessary to manage IBD. Surgery may be recommended if medication and lifestyle changes have not been effective in controlling symptoms or if complications have developed. The type of surgery will depend on the individual's specific condition and symptoms. For example, in ulcerative colitis, surgery may involve removing the entire colon and rectum (proctocolectomy). In Crohn's disease, surgery may involve removing the affected portion of the intestine.

## Integrative Approaches

Integrative approaches, such as acupuncture, meditation, and yoga, may also be helpful in managing IBD. These approaches

can help reduce stress and promote relaxation, which can in turn help alleviate symptoms. It's important to note that integrative approaches should be used in conjunction with, not in place of, conventional medical treatments [5].

## Conclusion

IBD is a complex condition that requires a multifaceted approach to management. Contemporary approaches to IBD management involve a combination of medications, diet and nutrition, surgery, and integrative approaches. By working closely with their healthcare provider and adopting a comprehensive treatment plan, people with IBD can improve their quality of life and better manage their symptoms.

## References

1. Ananthakrishnan AN. Epidemiology and risk factors for IBD. *Nat Rev Gastroenterol Hepatol*. 2015;12(4):205-17.
2. Khor B, Gardet A, Xavier RJ. Genetics and pathogenesis of inflammatory bowel disease. *Nature*. 2011;474(7351):307-17.
3. Osada T, Ohkusa T, Okayasu I, et al. Correlations among total colonoscopic findings, clinical symptoms, and laboratory markers in ulcerative colitis. *J Gastroenterol Hepatol*. 2008;23:S262-7.
4. Kostic M, Djakovic L, Sujic R, et al. Inflammatory bowel diseases (Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis): cost of treatment in Serbia and the implications. *Appl Health Econ Health Policy*. 2017;15:85-93.
5. Ferlay J, Soerjomataram I, Dikshit R, et al. Cancer incidence and mortality worldwide: sources, methods and major patterns in GLOBOCAN 2012. *Int J Cancer*. 2015;136(5):E359-86.