

## Pancreatitis is a condition that affects the pancreas.

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Accepted on December 11, 2021

Pancreatitis and exocrine pancreatic insufficiency (EPI) are both significant pancreatic illnesses. One of the most common causes of EPI is chronic pancreatitis.

Continue reading to learn more about the distinctions between EPI and pancreatitis, as well as other pancreas-related illnesses.

### **Symptoms of a malfunctioning pancreas**

The pancreas has multiple functions. It produces the insulin required to keep blood sugar levels in check. It also creates a significant amount of the enzymes required for food digestion and nutrient absorption. You're likely to experience at least some of the following symptoms if your pancreas isn't working properly:

- bloating, swelling, or pain in the abdomen
- nausea or vomiting
- excessive gas
- constipation
- foul-smelling faeces
- light-colored stool
- fever
- weight loss
- malnutrition

EPI, pancreatitis, or a variety of other pancreatic disorders could induce these symptoms.

### **Pancreatitis**

Your pancreas is inflamed when you have pancreatitis. There are various different forms of pancreatitis, each with its own set of causes. Acute, chronic, and inherited are the three main categories.

#### **Acute pancreatitis**

Acute pancreatitis appears out of nowhere. The pancreas is inflamed, causing intense pain in the upper abdomen that might linger for many days. Other signs and symptoms include: bloating, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and fever.

- Gallstones, prolonged alcohol use, trauma, infection, certain drugs, electrolyte, lipid, or hormone disorders, and inherited diseases are all causes of acute pancreatitis.
- Treatment is determined by the underlying cause.

#### **Chronic pancreatitis**

Chronic pancreatitis is a disease that worsens with time. Symptoms may include diarrhoea and weight loss in addition to

upper abdominal pain. The pancreas suffers irreversible damage as the disease advances. Due to EPI, this can result in diabetes and malnutrition.

Chronic alcohol abuse, cystic fibrosis, and inherited pancreatic abnormalities are all possible causes.

About 20% of patients with chronic pancreatitis go on to develop EPI.

Treatment options include pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy (PERT), insulin, and pain treatment, depending on the cause.

#### **Hereditary pancreatitis**

In many cases, genetic mutations, such as those in the PRSS1, SPINK1, and CFTR genes, cause chronic pancreatitis. Hereditary pancreatitis or intestinal anomalies can also cause pancreatitis.

Hereditary pancreatitis is a disease that worsens with time. PERT and pain management may be used as treatments.

#### **Exocrine pancreatic insufficiency**

EPI is a condition in which the pancreatic enzymes are inadequate to the point of malnutrition. Steatorrhea, or excess fat in the stools, is one sign of EPI. Stools that are:

- pale in colour
- foul-smelling
- difficult to flush are signs of this.

An oily leaking from the anus may also occur. Other signs and symptoms include:

- bloating or cramps in the abdomen
- gas
- faecal incontinence or diarrhoea
- weight loss
- starvation

Pancreatitis, cysts, or benign tumours of the pancreas, blockage or narrowing of the pancreatic or biliary duct, pancreatic cancer, side effects of pancreatic surgery, cystic fibrosis, and diabetes are all causes of EPI.

- PERT
- a low-fat diet, unless you have cystic fibrosis
- nutritional supplements, including fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K

- abstaining from alcohol and smoking

## **Diabetes**

Diabetes is a disease in which the pancreas fails to make enough insulin or the body is unable to use it properly. Insulin is required for glucose distribution to cells throughout the body. Excessive appetite and thirst, exhaustion, and frequent urination are all symptoms of uncontrolled diabetes.

The link between diabetes and EPI isn't completely clear. However, diabetes can put you at risk for EPI, and having EPI for a long time is linked to diabetes.

Diabetes treatment is determined on the type, symptoms, and

complications. Dietary management, insulin administration, and blood sugar monitoring may all be part of it. Your doctor may prescribe PERT if you have diabetes and develop EPI.

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