

ARTHRITIS

Dear @Name@,

Your healthcare team has discussed the following subject with you: arthritis. Here is some additional information. Let us know if you have any questions regarding this information.

Arthritis, or inflammation (pain with swelling) of the joints, is the most common complication of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) that appears outside of the gastrointestinal tract. Although arthritis is typically associated with older age, in IBD, it often strikes younger patients as well. There are two types of arthritis commonly seen in IBD.

Peripheral arthritis usually affects the large joints of the arms and legs. If left untreated, the pain may last from a few days to several weeks. The level of joint inflammation generally mirrors the extent of inflammation in the intestine. Although no specific test can make an absolute diagnosis, various tests-including analysis of joint fluid, blood tests, and X-rays-may be used to rule out other causes of joint pain. In the general population, people with peripheral arthritis may use nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as aspirin and ibuprofen, to reduce pain and swelling of the joints. However, these medications are not a good option for everyone with IBD because they can irritate the intestines and increase the inflammation. It is important to discuss the use of NSAIDs with your healthcare team. In addition to medication, your healthcare team may recommend resting the affected joint, use of moist heat, or range of motion exercises, as demonstrated by a physical therapist.

Axial Arthritis is also known as spondylitis or spondyloarthropathy. Axial arthritis produces pain and stiffness in the lower spine and at the bottom of the back (sacroiliac joints). These symptoms may come on months or even years before the symptoms of IBD appear. This form of arthritis may cause permanent damage if the bones of the vertebral column fuse together-thereby creating decreased range of motion in the back. Therapy often includes the use of biologic therapies. Non-medical therapies are geared toward improving range-of-motion in the back. Stretching exercises are recommended, as is the application of moist heat to the back.

For further information, please check out <https://www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/what-is-ibd/extraintestinal-complications-ibd> or follow this link:

</sites/default/files/2020-03/arthritiscomplications.pdf>