

Discussion Guide for Diagnostic and Prognostic Testing for IBD

The path to receiving a Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis diagnosis can be overwhelming at times. The best thing you can do is be educated and prepared. We can help you understand the process of diagnosing inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) and the common tests and procedures your healthcare team may recommend you undergo.

Diagnostic Testing

A diagnostic test is a test that helps diagnose a disease or condition.

Common IBD Diagnostic Tests



Blood and stool tests: A sample of blood and/or stool is taken to determine if inflammation is present.



Endoscopies: A small camera mounted to the end of a lighted tube is inserted through the mouth or the anus and looks inside the GI tract to determine location and severity of inflammation.



Biopsies: During an endoscopy, your physician will remove a piece of tissue from the GI tract to check for disease.



Radiology scans: A picture of your GI tract to determine blockage, scarring of intestines, thickness of bowel wall, and/or location of complications such as fistulas, abscesses, or strictures.

Questions to ask your doctor about diagnostic testing:

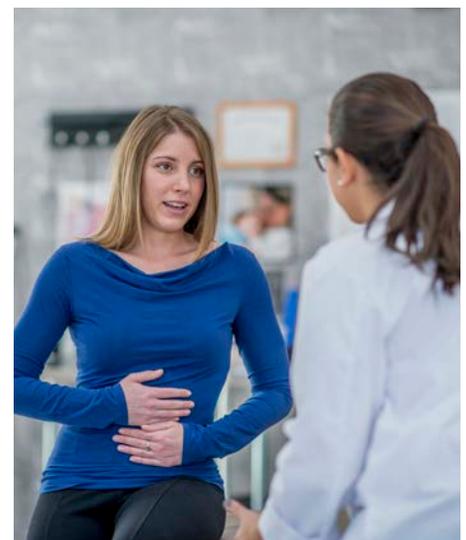
- What tests will you use to confirm my diagnosis?
- What are you looking for in each test?
- How will I need to prepare for the test?
- How often will I take the test?
- When will I find out the results?
- Is there a recovery period after the test?
- What treatments can I take to manage symptoms while waiting for a diagnosis?

Common endoscopies:

- **Colonoscopy:** Examines the colon and end of small intestine
- **Upper GI endoscopy:** Examines the upper end of the digestive system (esophagus, stomach, small bowel)
- **Sigmoidoscopy:** Examines the left side of the colon and/or rectum

Common scans include:

- X-ray
- CT Scan
- MRI
- Ultrasound



Prognostic Testing

A prognostic test is a test used to predict a patient's likelihood of developing a disease or experiencing a complication. Researchers are currently studying biological products found in a person's blood and tissue to help predict the progression of IBD, and if you are likely to develop complications down the road. Many of these tests have not been widely adopted in clinical practice due in part to the need for more validated scientific evidence. Talk to your doctor to determine if a prognostic test for IBD might be useful in your care.

Questions to ask your doctor about prognostic testing:

- Do I meet the criteria to take a prognostic test?
- When would it make sense to take the test?
- What would the result of the test mean for my course of treatment?
- Do you recommend that I take a prognostic test?
- How reliable are the results of the test in predicting outcomes?
- Will my insurance company cover the cost of the test?



For more information about diagnostic and prognostic tests visit:

www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/what-is-ibd/diagnosing-ibd



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