

Fact Sheet

News from the IBD Help Center

ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotics can be used in the management of IBD, including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. They are used to treat infections that may occur as a result of the disease itself, or from suppression of immunity. Sometimes infections can look a lot like the symptoms of an IBD flare. Your doctor will check to see if an infection may be the cause of the change in your symptoms.

Common reasons for taking an antibiotic for IBD include:

- Developing *Clostridioides difficile* (C. diff) colitis, a bacteria that attacks the intestines (usually the colon) and can cause fever, abdominal pain, cramping, diarrhea, and bloody stools.
- Developing *Giardia lamblia* or other parasites and bacteria, which can cause infections.
- Managing inflammation or complications of IBD.
- Treating abscesses or fistulas that may develop in individuals with Crohn's disease.
- Preventing recurrence of Crohn's disease soon after surgery.
- Treating pouchitis following surgery to remove the colon and creation of a pouch.

Other important points to know about this class of medication:

- Antibiotics are taken orally or through an IV.
- Antibiotics are generally well tolerated but may commonly cause side effects including nausea, loss of appetite, rash, diarrhea, dizziness, and headaches.
- Despite treating infections, antibiotics themselves may make you more susceptible to new infections, especially C. diff. Your healthcare team may recommend the use of a probiotic to try and replenish helpful gut bacteria, preventing the development of other infections.

Some of the more commonly prescribed antibiotics include Ciprofloxacin and Metronidazole

[Animated Video](#)

[View the full list of FDA-approved antibiotics](#) commonly prescribed for IBD

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