

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

IBD is a term that describes disorders involving chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract



Two of the most prevalent types of IBD are Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis. Crohn's Disease is characterised by inflammation that can occur anywhere along the gastrointestinal tract, from the mouth to the anus, often affecting multiple segments. Ulcerative Colitis specifically targets the large intestine (colon) and rectum, causing inflammation and ulcers in the lining of these areas.

Symptoms

Symptoms and Complications Overview

IBD can lead to various complications in the colon and rectum, as well as affecting other parts of the body. Symptoms of IBD can fluctuate, with individuals experiencing flare-ups followed by periods of remission. The primary symptoms of IBD can include diarrhoea lasting longer than four weeks, urgency to have a bowel movement, the presence of blood or mucus in the stool, abdominal pain, rectal bleeding, unintended weight loss, iron deficiency and fatigue. In some cases of IBD, individuals may experience further complications in the intestines, inflammation and redness in the eyes (known as uveitis), mouth ulcers and skin lesions.

Possible causes

IBD is a disease with multifactorial 'possible' causes

- Immune system activation to combat an invading virus or bacterium, inadvertently targeting cells in the digestive tract, leading to inflammation.
- Hereditary factors and familial links increases the likelihood of developing IBD.
- Genetic / Environmental factors.
- Race / Ethnicity: IBD is more common in white people.

UK Statistics

1 in every 123 people in the UK have either Crohn's Disease or Ulcerative Colitis

Approximately one out of every 123 individuals in the UK is affected. This equates to nearly half a million people in the UK living with IBD, nearly double that of the 300,000 previously estimated.

Diet & Nutrition

There are many ways to support a person with IBD with a personalised nutrition and lifestyle approach. BANT nutrition practitioners assess and identify potential nutritional imbalances to understand how these may contribute to an individual's symptoms and health concerns. There is no singular treatment for IBD, however it can be successfully supported with dietary and lifestyle recommendations to manage frequency and severity of symptoms and occurrence.

