



CROHN'S DISEASE

Bromley

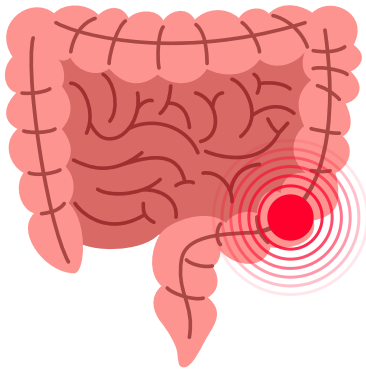
Well

HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated December 2025

What is Crohn's disease?

Crohn's disease is a type of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD). It is a lifelong condition that causes inflammation in parts of the bowel. It can lead to ulcers throughout the gastrointestinal tract, bowel perforation or holes in the bowel, fistulas, and other complications.



What are the symptoms?

- Diarrhoea
- Stomach aches and cramps
- Blood in your poo
- Fatigue
- Weight loss
- Abnormal balance of gut bacteria which can originate with a previous stomach bug.

SELF CARE TIPS

DON'T SMOKE AND DRINK LESS

Those who have Crohn's disease and smoke are more likely to have disease complications and higher risk surgeries. Alcohol may interfere with your medication but it also irritates the lining of your bowel which can make symptoms worse.

INCREASE HYDRATING FLUID INTAKE

You are more likely to be dehydrated if you have Crohn's disease as your digestive system absorbs less water and it is lost in your stool.

To register with Bromley Well:
Freephone 0808 278 7898
Or register online:
www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer

Contact Lifestyle Support direct
07985 431484 / 07985 444210
or email
enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk



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What are the causes?

The exact cause is not known but there are a few factors that can play a role and increase risk:

- Family history
- Ethnicity
- Autoimmunity
- Environmental factors such as cigarette smoke and pollution

What about treatment?

- Steroids to reduce inflammation.
- Medicine to stop inflammation returning.
- Surgery to remove part of the digestive system that is damaged.
- Alterations to diet – many people with Crohn's find that less spicy or lower fibre food can help with flare-ups.

SELF CARE TIPS

EXERCISE REGULARLY

Exercise can help with digestion function but also decrease stress. Resistance training also decreases risk of osteoporosis which can be a complication of Crohn's disease.



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Some myths

Myth 1: There is one specific diet can cure Crohn's disease

No, understanding what foods can trigger symptoms and having a well balanced diet to ensure you are getting adequate nutrition is essential when you have Crohn's disease, as you are often more at risk of being nutrient deficient. However, diet changes are often extremely individual and changes to diet during a flare only reduces the symptoms but does not remove the inflammation. It may be worth using a food diary to track what food you eat and the effect it has on your body. The only food that is often advised to cut out during a flare is fibre.



SELF CARE TIPS

LOOK INTO MANAGING STRESS

Stress is part of day to day life but chronic stress can increase inflammation in your body and exacerbate symptoms. Make sure you are taking time to refill your cup, spending time with people you love, asking for help and doing things you enjoy.

FIND SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups can provide understanding and reassurance that people may not be able to get from family and friends.

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FURTHER RESOURCES

Crohn's and Colitis UK

<https://crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/info-support/support-for-you>

Helpline 0300 222 5700

Charity for those with Crohn's and Colitis, providing support such as a helpline, local support services, online social events and getting can't wait cards to allow access to public toilets.

Crohn's and Colitis Foundation

<https://www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/science-and-professionals/patient-resources/patient-brochures>

Free educational booklets.

Guts UK Factsheet

<https://gutscharity.org.uk/advice-and-information/conditions/crohns-disease/>

Factsheet on Crohn's Disease from Guts UK who are a charity that raise awareness on all things related on the digestive system.

NHS information sheet

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/crohns-disease/>

Information regarding Crohn's Disease from the NHS website, going through diagnosis, symptoms and treatments etc.

References: NHS Condition: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/crohns-disease/> Crohn's and Colitis UK <https://crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/>

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