

Ulcerative Colitis

Ulcerative colitis is a bowel disease. The cause is not known. The inner lining of the colon, also called the large intestine, becomes irritated or inflamed. Tiny sores or ulcers form and can cause bleeding. This often starts in the lower part of the colon and can spread.

Signs

You may have some or all of these signs:

- Stomach pain
- Diarrhea
- Bleeding in stool or from the rectum
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Loss of body fluids, also called dehydration

Signs may be mild or more severe.

Your Care

Your doctor will check you and order tests. These tests may include:

- A stool sample to test for blood.
- Blood tests.
- A barium enema to see an x-ray picture of the colon.
- A test to look at the inside of the rectum and colon, called a colostomy. Sometimes a tissue sample, called a biopsy, is taken to be checked in the lab.

Your treatment may include:

- Diet changes to help control signs.
 - › Avoid foods that make your signs worse. These may include fatty or fried foods, and high fiber foods such as beans, nuts, seeds or bran.
 - › Eat small amounts of food every few hours rather than 2 or 3 large meals each day.
 - › Drink water all through the day.
- Managing stress, which can make signs worse.
- Medicines to control colon inflammation.
- Surgery.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.