

Mental Health & Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis

Crohn's and Colitis are medical illness. Why are we talking about mental health?

Chronic disease impacts both physical and emotional well-being. Individuals with IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease), including Crohn's and Colitis are at-risk for developing the following mental health concerns:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Low self-esteem

Do you ever feel embarrassed or avoid talking about your disease with others?

- It can be common to avoid or deny symptoms associated with IBD because of feelings of embarrassment and potential negative social consequences.
- In turn, people avoid seeking appropriate care and support during a time when physical pain, weight loss, growth failure, and arthritis are developing.
- Denying the emotional toll can make things worse.

What can be done to help?

Effective treatment for IBD, including Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis should involve psychoeducation and psychotherapy to address feelings, beliefs, and overall level of functioning.

- Education: Information can provide the individual with an increased sense of power and control over their situation
- Coping strategies such as relaxation training, diaphragmatic breathing, and guided imagery techniques can assist the individual when managing anxiety and/or pain
- Patients may require additional support when coping with anxiety and/or mood swings associated with steroid use.

At PCS, our psychologists specialize in working with children, adults and families with chronic medical illness. Please contact our intake coordinator for more information.

763-559-7050