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Ulcerative Colitis Assessment

Ulcerative colitis is an inflammatory bowel disorder that primarily affects the colon. The disease is characterized by periodic remissions and exacerbations.

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Assessment

Cramping Abdominal Pain

Abdominal Clamps and Pain-bolt

Patients often present with abdominal pain in the lower quadrants of the abdomen and characteristically describe this pain as crampy or colicky. The pain is often relieved with defecation.

Tenesmus

Tennis-moose

Tenesmus is a very unpleasant sensation of the need to defecate immediately, despite an empty colon. Ulcerative colitis patients may encounter this 10-20 times per day.

Bloody Diarrhea

Red Toilet

Inflammation of only the superficial layers of the intestinal mucosa cause a bloody diarrhea in patients because of increased blood flow to the inflammed tissue. The stool often has flecks of mucus.

Up to 10-20 / Day

(10) Tin with (20) Dollar-bill

These patients defecate excessively as often as 10-20 stools per day. Defecating this often causes anxiety and fear of leaving the proximity of a restroom, which may severely affect the patient's lifestyle.

Fever

Fever-beaver

Patients often experience fever during acute exacerbations of the disease. This fever is often low grade. A presentation of a high fever may be indicative of peritonitis related to a bowel perforation.

Complications

Hemorrhage

Hemorrhage-hammer

The superficial layers of the intestine are often inflamed and hyperemic due to increased blood flow. This inflammation may cause weakening of the blood vessels and cause hemorrhage. Patients will present with hematochezia or large amounts of frank blood from the rectum.

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