

crohns disease

Crohns disease is a long-term inflammatory condition that can be found in any part of the gastrointestinal tract (from the mouth to the anus). It most commonly involves the lower end of the small intestine (ileum) and/or the large intestine (colon). Although the gastrointestinal tract is inflamed it may be interspersed with healthy sections of intestine. As Crohns can affect various sections of the intestine, different names can be used to describe the parts that are affected; these different names are ileitis, ileocolitis, Crohns colitis or simply colitis.

The incidence of Crohns disease is around 5 cases per 100,000 population, and it can occur at any age, although it is most common between the ages of 20-40 years.

Crohns disease develops in stages, starting with an attack of inflammation, which can lead to a partial blocking of the intestine, and can progress to intestinal obstruction and scarring. Crohn's can be fatal if an intestinal blockage occurs or an abscess ruptures, which can cause holes in the intestine or blood infections.

Crohns may lead to other complications such as increased risk of small bowel and colorectal cancer, skin disorders, arthritis, liver disease, gallstone and kidney stones and many more. As the intestine is scarred and narrows due to inflammation there can be a decrease in the amount of nutrients absorbed during digestion.

On the program

Clients who suffer from Crohns will be advised to avoid dairy products completely, and to drink plenty of fluids such as filtered water and herbal teas. Smoking is discouraged.

Causes

It is unknown what exactly causes Crohn's disease. It is thought that it may be triggered by an irregular immune response to environmental, dietary or infectious agent. It has been found that there is a genetic predisposition, as 1 in 6 patients have a first degree relative with the disease.

Symptoms

Symptoms of Crohns disease can include:

- Cramps and abdominal pains, that may occur during eating or soon after
- Diarrhoea
- Fatigue
- Poor appetite and loss of weight
- Nausea and vomiting
- Rectal bleeding

An individual may be free of symptoms for long periods of time, but the disease can recur at various times with no warning. Recurrence of the condition after the first attack occurs in more than 50% of individuals.

Treatment

Treatment will depend on the location and severity of the disease, and complications. The main purpose of any Crohn's disease treatment is to correct nutritional deficiencies, control inflammation and relieve the symptoms of diarrhoea, abdominal pain and rectal bleeding. It will mostly involve the use on medication, nutritional supplements or surgery.

A high fibre diet including vegetables, fruit, and cereals is recommended. Keeping in mind though that at times of an attack or complications special dietary recommendations will be put into place. There is no proven diet to completely prevent or treat Crohns, but it is found that some symptoms are made worse by milk, alcohol, hot spices or fibre in some individuals.

Unfortunately most treatments will only help in reducing the symptoms/problems associated with the disease, as at present there is no known cure.

For individuals with Crohn's it is important that they keep regular appointments with their doctor to check and monitor their condition.

Client's who suffer from either Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis are able to follow Quick Loss Program, providing they are stable (i.e. not suffering from diarrhoea). These clients will be given the seed alternative.

In general those who suffer from Crohns disease can enjoy a normal life expectancy if they manage their disease.

References:

- <http://www.healthnetwork.com.au>
- <http://www.accaq.org.au/whatis/crohns.htm>
- <http://www.crohns-disease-info.com>