

February
2024



SAINT PETER'S HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Treating you better...for life.



Stock Photo. Posed by model.

UNDERSTANDING Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis

Crohn's disease is a chronic autoimmune inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) that can significantly impact a person's quality of life. It can affect any part of the digestive tract, but it most commonly affects the small intestine. The symptoms vary from person to person, but common signs include abdominal pain, diarrhea, fatigue, weight loss, and bloody stools. Some people may also experience nausea, vomiting, and a reduced appetite. These symptoms often come and go, leading to periods of flare-ups and remission.

"Not only is Crohn's disease painful, but it can also be exhausting to the point of affecting your daily life. It can impact the quality time you spend with your family and friends, your focus at work or school, and the energy you need to perform daily tasks. While there is no cure for Crohn's disease, various treatment options can manage symptoms and help improve overall well-being," said Arkady Broder, MD, FACP, FASGE, chief of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology and director of the Endoscopy Unit at Saint Peter's University Hospital.



Treatment Options for Crohn's Disease

The choice of treatment for Crohn's disease depends on the severity of the disease and individual factors. Common approaches include:

Medications: Anti-inflammatory drugs and immunosuppressants can help reduce inflammation in the digestive tract.

Nutritional Therapy: Some individuals benefit from specific diets or nutritional supplements to manage symptoms and promote the healing of damaged tissue.

Surgery: In cases of severe complications or when medications are ineffective, surgery may be necessary. Common procedures involve removing damaged portions of the intestine or repairing obstructions.

Lifestyle Changes: Adopting a healthy lifestyle can complement medical treatments. This includes quitting smoking, maintaining a balanced diet, staying hydrated, and managing stress.

When to See a Gastrointestinal Specialist

"If you are experiencing persistent digestive issues, it's essential to seek the expertise of a gastrointestinal (GI) specialist. We can help you with a diagnosis and present treatment options that align with your lifestyle and the severity of your disease," said Dr. Broder.

See a GI specialist if you are experiencing...

- **Persistent Symptoms:** If you have ongoing abdominal pain, diarrhea, or other digestive symptoms that last for more than a few days, it's time to consult a specialist.
- **Unexplained Weight Loss:** Significant and unexplained weight loss could be a sign of underlying digestive issues such as Crohn's disease.
- **Blood in Stools:** If you notice blood in your stools or experience rectal bleeding, it's crucial to see a specialist as soon as possible.
- **Unexplained Anemia:** If you have been diagnosed with low red blood cell counts (anemia), it is important to have a gastrointestinal evaluation. Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) can frequently lead to iron and blood loss, causing anemia to develop.
- **Frequent Flare-ups:** If you have been diagnosed with Crohn's disease and experience frequent flare-ups, it's essential to work closely with a GI specialist to manage the condition effectively.

The Difference Between Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis

Ulcerative colitis is a chronic autoimmune disease that primarily affects the colon and rectum. It is characterized by inflammation and ulcers in the lining of the colon, leading to a range of symptoms such as abdominal pain, diarrhea, rectal bleeding, weight loss, fatigue, and an urgent need to evacuate the bowels. Like in Crohn's disease, the severity of symptoms can vary, with periods of active disease interspersed with periods of remission.

Despite these similarities, there are important distinctions between ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease:

Location of Inflammation: Crohn's disease can affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract while ulcerative colitis primarily affects the colon and rectum, with inflammation usually starting in the rectum and extending continuously into the colon.

Depth of Inflammation: Ulcerative colitis typically involves inflammation in the innermost lining of the colon, while Crohn's disease can affect multiple layers of the bowel wall.

Complications: Crohn's disease is often associated with a higher risk of complications such as strictures (narrowing of the intestine), fistulas (abnormal connections between organs), and abscesses. Ulcerative colitis, on the other hand, may be associated with complications like severe bleeding, toxic megacolon, and an increased risk of colon cancer.

If you are experiencing persistent digestive symptoms, seeking a diagnosis and treatment options from a gastroenterologist can make a significant difference in improving your overall well-being.

MyIBD Learning:

**Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD),
Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis**

Wednesday, February 21 • 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Saint Peter's University Hospital
254 Easton Avenue • New Brunswick, NJ
Sister Marie de Pazzi Conference Center

Register: saintpetershcs.com/IBD



To learn more, visit saintpetershcs.com/gastroenterology

Five Simple Steps for a Stronger Heart

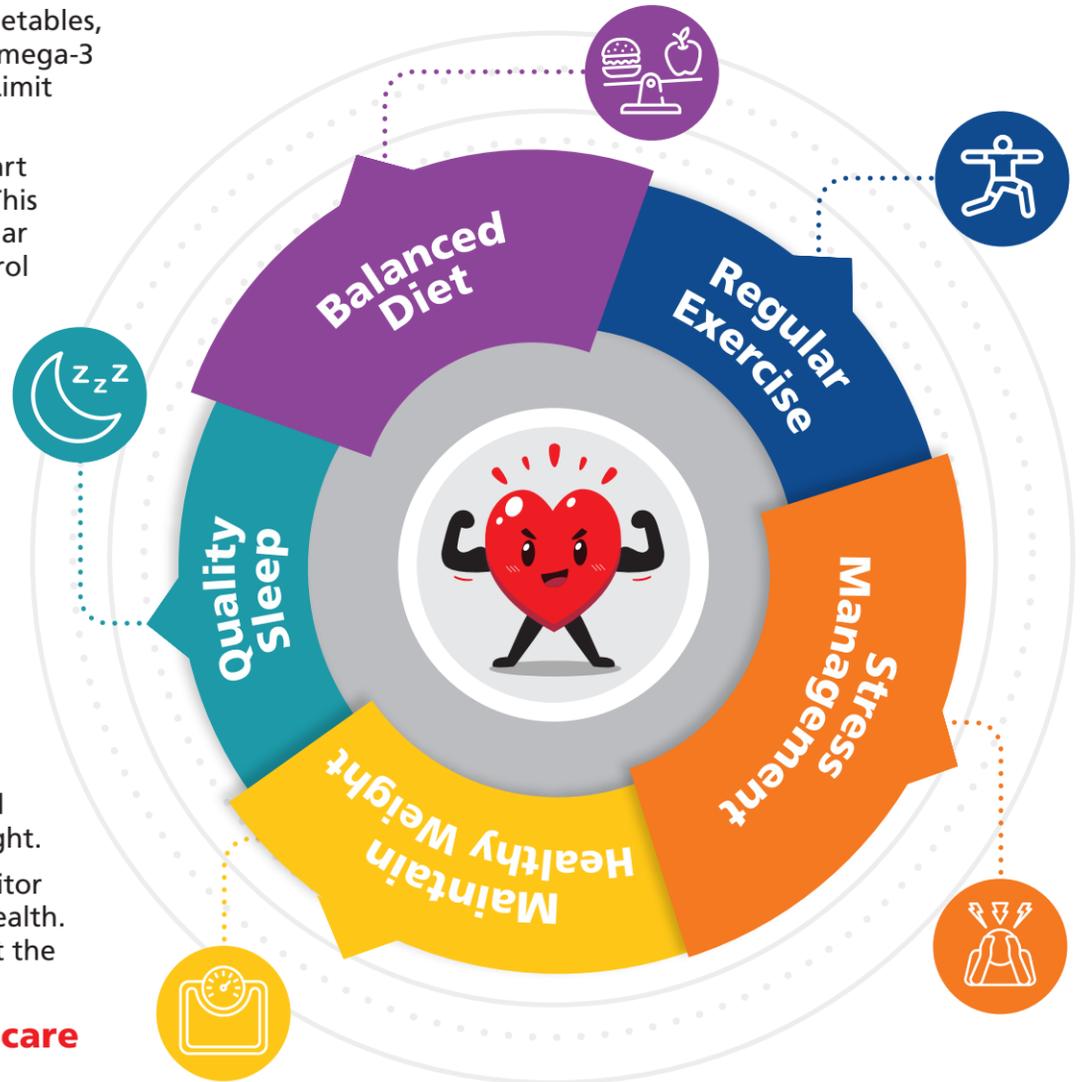
February is Heart Health Month, a month dedicated to raising awareness about cardiovascular health and promoting preventive measures against heart disease. A healthy heart is the cornerstone of overall wellness and adopting a heart-healthy lifestyle can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease.

By incorporating five simple yet impactful habits into your daily routine, you can promote cardiovascular health and enjoy a more energetic life.

- 1. Balanced Diet:** A heart-healthy diet is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Choose foods high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as walnuts, to support heart function. Limit saturated and trans fats, sodium, and added sugars.
- 2. Regular Exercise:** Physical activity is a key player in heart health. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise per day. This could include brisk walking, cycling, or swimming. Regular exercise can lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol levels. Speak with your healthcare provider before beginning any exercise program.
- 3. Stress Management:** Chronic stress can take a toll on your heart. Incorporate stress-reducing practices like meditation and deep breathing into your daily routine to help calm the mind.
- 4. Maintain a Healthy Weight:** Being overweight puts additional strain on the heart. Strive for a body mass index (BMI) within the recommended range for your age, sex, and height. A combination of a balanced diet and regular exercise can help achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- 5. Quality Sleep:** Poor sleep patterns have been linked to an increased risk of heart disease, so prioritize getting enough sleep to allow your heart to recover and rejuvenate. Aim for 7 to 9 hours of restful sleep each night.

It's important to schedule regular health check-ups to monitor your blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and overall heart health. Detecting and addressing potential issues early can prevent the development of heart disease.

To make an appointment with a primary care physician near you, visit SPPANJ.com.



Community Calendar

For more information or to register for a program, call the contact number listed or visit saintpetershcs.com/events. Most programs are FREE unless noted; please call for information.

Cancer Support

- Bone Marrow Transplant**
For patients who have had an allogeneic transplant
Call for information: 732.235.8522
- Breast Cancer**
Call for information: 732.235.7011
- Gynecologic Cancer**
In partnership with the Cancer Support Community Central NJ
Call for information: 732.235.6792
- Living with Cancer**
Call for information: 732.235.7557

Diabetes Education*

- For information about classes, call the numbers listed below.
- Diabetes Self-Management Education**
Call for information: 732.339.7630
- Gestational Diabetes Self-Management Education**
Call for information: 732.339.7630
- Prevent T2 Program**
New session! First virtual class: February 19 • 7 – 8 pm
Call for information and registration: 732.339.7772

Parent Education

- Some parenting classes are being held online. Register at saintpetershcs.com/ParentEducation. Once registered for a class, access information will be provided to you. For information about the following classes, please call Parent Education at 732.745.8579.
- Baby Care Birth Center Class**
(for moms under midwifery care)
 - Breastfeeding Class**
 - Grandparents Class**
 - Hypnobirthing**
 - Marvelous Multiples New Daddy Class**
 - Prenatal Yoga/ Exercise Class**
 - Prepared Childbirth/ Lamaze Classes**
 - Sibling Class**
 - Spinning Babies**

Parent Support

- Registration is required. Visit saintpetershcs.com/ParentEducation or call 732.745.8579.
- Breastfeeding Support Group**
1st Tuesday of each month
Next meeting: February 6 • 1 pm
 - New Moms Support Group "Life Will Never Be The Same"**
1st Tuesday of each month
Next meeting: February 6 • 12 pm

Support Groups

- Bariatric Nutrition Support**
2nd Thursday of each month
Next meeting: February 8 • 6 – 7 pm
Call 732.339.7450 for Zoom meeting information
- Bereavement**
Call Pastoral Care for information: 732.745.8565
- Craniofacial Teen Girls**
Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8113
- MyGoal Autism Family**
2nd Sunday of each month
Next meeting: February 11 • 3 pm
Call 877.886.9462 or email info@mygoalautism.org for virtual meeting information
- SHARE**
3rd Thursday of each month
Next meeting: February 15 • 7 – 9 pm
Call 732.745.8522 or email imariano@saintpetersuh.com for Zoom link
- Spouse/Partner Caregiver Support**
Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8653

Saint Peter's Virtual Urgent Care

Monday – Friday
5 to 10 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



saintpetershcs.com/virtualurgentcare

WOMEN KNOW BEST

WINNER IN 7 CATEGORIES
Breast Care • Cancer Care
Mammogram Imaging
Minimally Invasive Surgery
Obstetrics • Stroke Care
Women's Services



SAINT PETER'S UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
A MEMBER OF SAINT PETER'S HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

COVID-19 Vaccines

For age eligibility and clinic locations and dates, visit saintpetershcs.com/covidvaccine



Need a doctor? To find a Saint Peter's physician, visit saintpetershcs.com/findaphysician.

Online scheduling is also available with select Saint Peter's Healthcare System physicians via Zocdoc at BookMySPDoc.com

This calendar is for information only. Do not rely on it to make healthcare decisions on your own; instead, talk with your healthcare provider for advice and treatment. Do not ignore medical advice or delay seeking it because of something you read here. We do not suggest or endorse that you have any tests, use products, or use other information in this document without advice from your healthcare provider.



254 Easton Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
732.745.8600 | 800.269.7508 | saintpetershcs.com

Sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Metuchen
State-designated children's hospital and regional perinatal center

