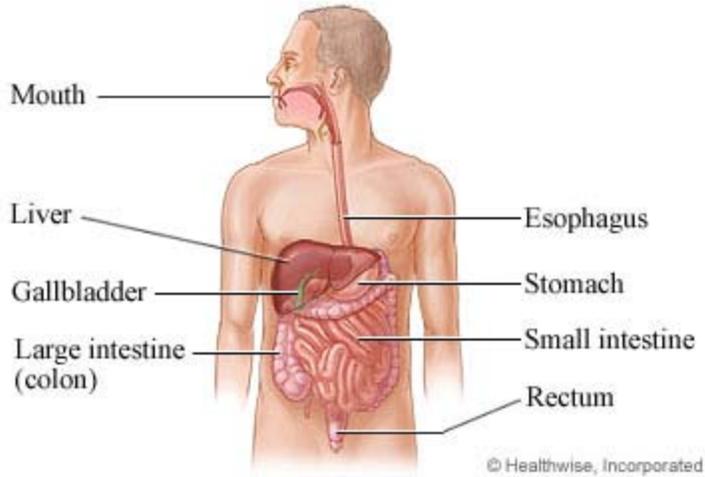


# Ulcerative Colitis: After Your Visit

## Your Care Instructions



Ulcerative colitis is an inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). In ulcerative colitis, the large intestine (colon) becomes inflamed and develops ulcers that can bleed. The disease can affect part or all of the colon. An attack of ulcerative colitis can cause painful belly cramping and bloody diarrhea. The amount of the colon that it affects usually predicts how bad the disease will get.

Bad attacks of ulcerative colitis often have to be treated in the hospital so that you can get medicines, fluid, and nutrition through a tube in your vein, called an IV. This gives your digestive system time to rest and recover. You may need surgery to remove your colon if your condition gets worse and the medicines do not work well enough.

Take your medicines, eat well, and keep your follow-up appointments. This can help you manage ulcerative colitis.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

- Take your medicines exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor if you think you are having a problem with your medicine. You will get more details on the specific medicines your doctor prescribes.
- Do not take anti-inflammatory medicines, such as aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve). They may make your symptoms worse. Do not take any other medicines or herbal products without talking to your doctor first.
- Avoid foods that make your symptoms worse. These might include milk, alcohol, or spicy foods.
- Eat a healthy diet. Make sure to get enough iron. Rectal bleeding may make you lose iron. Good sources of iron include beef, lentils, spinach, raisins, and iron-enriched breads and cereals.
- Take any nutrition supplements that your doctor prescribes.
- Seek support from friends and family to help cope with your illness. It can affect all parts of your life. Get counseling if you need it.

## When should you call for help?

**Call 911** anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You have severe belly pain.
- You passed out (lost consciousness).

**Call your doctor now** or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have signs of needing more fluids. You have sunken eyes and a dry mouth, and you pass only a little dark urine.
- You have a fever or shaking chills.
- Your belly is bloated.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- Your symptoms get worse.
- You have diarrhea for more than 2 weeks.
- You have unexplained weight loss.

## **Where can you learn more?**

Go to [www.southdenvergi.com](http://www.southdenvergi.com), log into the web portal, and enter F514 in the search box to learn more about Ulcerative Colitis: After Your Visit.

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