



Patient & Family Guide  
2025

# Ulcerative Proctitis



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# Ulcerative Proctitis

Ulcerative proctitis is a type of inflammatory bowel disease.

## What is inflammatory bowel disease?

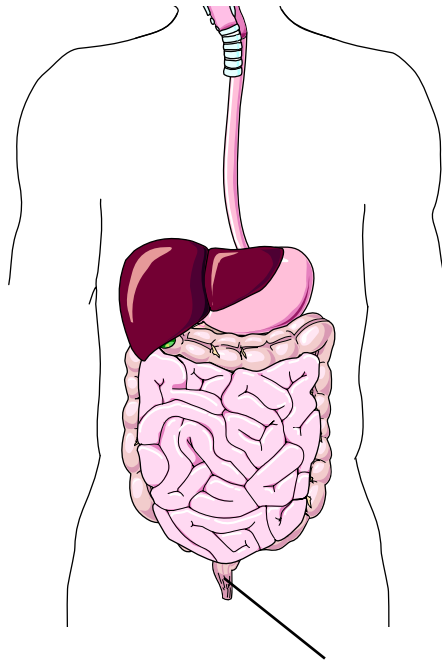
- Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is the name for diseases that cause inflammation (swelling and irritation) in the intestines.
- IBD includes:
  - › Ulcerative proctitis
  - › Ulcerative colitis
  - › Crohn's disease

**What are your questions?**

**Please ask a member of your health care team. We are here to help you.**

## What is ulcerative proctitis?

- Ulcerative colitis is a condition that causes the whole inner lining of the colon (large bowel or large intestine) to get red and swollen with sores. These sores are called ulcers.
- Ulcerative proctitis is a type of ulcerative colitis. Ulcerative proctitis only affects the rectum (bum) and lowest 15 to 20 cm of the colon.



**Rectum (bum) and lowest 15 to 20 cm of the colon**

## **How is ulcerative proctitis diagnosed?**

- You will have a test called a **sigmoidoscopy**. The doctor will put a tube that bends through your anus, to your rectum, and into the last 25 cm of your large bowel. The tube has a small light and a camera on the end, which lets the doctor look at the inside of your rectum and lower bowel.
- The doctor will take a biopsy (a small piece of bowel tissue) during the test and send it to the lab for testing.
- Most people do not need sedation (medication to help them relax or feel sleepy) during the test and biopsy.

**What are your questions? Please ask a member of your health care team.  
We are here to help you.**

**In Nova Scotia you can call 811 to talk with a registered nurse about your health care questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

## **What are the symptoms of ulcerative proctitis?**

- Blood in the toilet, on toilet paper, or in your bowel movements (poop)
- Itchy rectum
- Mucus in your poop
- Belly cramps (pain below your belly button)
- Feeling like you always need to poop even though you do not have to
- Feeling like you need to poop right away
- Diarrhea (loose, watery poop) 3 or more times a day
- Constipation (not being able to poop) 3 or more times a day

People with ulcerative proctitis can still take in nutrients (like electrolytes) and water from the food they eat through their bowel. This helps them to stay healthy.

## How is ulcerative proctitis treated?

- There is no cure for ulcerative proctitis. The goal of treatment is to:
  - › Help lower symptoms
  - › Prevent flare-ups
  - › Heal inflammation
- Some medications lower bowel swelling. This lets the bowel heal and helps symptoms of rectal bleeding, diarrhea, and belly pain.
- A common treatment is rectal therapy. This may include suppositories, enemas, or foams used directly on the rectum to lower inflammation.
- Your doctor may order some of these Aspirin<sup>®</sup>-like drugs (called aminosalicylates) to help manage your symptoms:
  - › Mesalamine (Mezavant<sup>®</sup>, Pentasa<sup>®</sup>)
  - › Sulfasalazine (Salazopyrin<sup>®</sup>)

# Notes:

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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:  
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:  
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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