



## Frequently Asked Questions on Medication in IBD

### **Why should I take medication if I feel fine?**

Research has proven that medication helps control your ulcerative colitis (UC). Taking your medication as prescribed by your Doctor is an important part of managing the symptoms of ulcerative colitis. Taking it even when you feel fine, can help you reduce the risk of a flare-up and lengthen the remission phase (disease under control).

### **Is the medication I am taking safe?**

Medicines are not prescribed unless they have undergone rigorous trials and tests and then been approved by an independent regulatory authority.

### **Should I take other medication not prescribed by my doctor?**

Sometimes people take 'herbal' or 'alternative' therapies. It is vital that your Doctor is aware of this as they can interact dangerously with prescribed medication. Your Doctor is duty bound to keep you as safe as possible and needs some information from you to do this.

### **What benefits can I gain from remission therapy?**

Taking your medication regularly and as prescribed by your doctor offers a number of benefits, including:

- Treating inflammation to control symptoms of UC such as bloody diarrhoea and abdominal pain/cramping.
- Reducing the risk of flare-ups.
- Extending the time between flare-ups.

### **How can I remember to take my medication regularly?**

Your Doctor or your IBD Nurse can help you develop a treatment plan that suits your lifestyle. Some patients find it easier to take their medication at the same time every day. You may need to consider designing a reminder system that will help you remember to take your medication e.g. regular reminder on your mobile phone.

### **Can I take my medication only during a flare-up?**

Taking medication during a flare-up will help you get back into remission. But if you want to prolong the period of remission and help prevent future flare-ups, you should take your medication regularly.



### **Can I reduce the number of tablets I take?**

Dosages required to treat symptoms can vary depending on whether you are having a flare-up or in remission. Do not alter your treatment without consulting your Doctor.

### **Will the medication I am taking cause any side effects?**

Your Doctor, IBD Nurse or Pharmacist can help put your mind at ease about any possible side effects. These may differ between patients. Some patients may have little or no side effects. Sometimes what you think is a side effect of the medication may actually be a disease symptom and vice versa. Talk to your Doctor immediately if you feel your medication is not working and he/she can alter your treatment.

### **Do I need to visit my Doctor if I feel well and continue to take my medication?**

Yes you should, so that your progress is monitored and your medication adjusted if necessary.

### **I am not happy with the medication I am taking. What should I do?**

If you think your medication is not helping you, talk to your Doctor or IBD nurse and he/she can look at the possibility of modifying your treatment. Write down your concerns and ask your Doctor at your next appointment.

### **I can't afford to pay for my medication, what can I do?**

You may qualify for financial assistance to help pay for your medication. Your Doctor, IBD Nurse or Pharmacist will direct you to information on your entitlements.

### **Where can I get reliable information on my medication?**

Ask your Doctor or IBD Nurse, they can answer your questions. When you have a question, write it down and ask at your next appointment. They can also provide you with booklets and leaflets on a variety of topics related to your treatment.



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