

What if my prescription runs out?

Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are chronic conditions and require medical management. Following diagnosis patients will be prescribed medication and should not stop this medication unless instructed by their doctor or CNS. Patients should ask their doctor to renew their prescription while at clinic. If a patient forgets to ask for the prescription at clinic, or their prescription runs out, they should contact their GP to renew the prescription. The pharmacy may need to order in your medicine, so DO NOT leave renewals to the last week! Those with a medical card will need their GP to re-write the prescription.

Research

We are continually striving to improve our service. As part of this we undertake regular research projects in IBD, which may vary from a simple questionnaire to a new medication or donating a blood sample. You may be asked to participate in a research project. Your participation is completely voluntary and while we greatly appreciate your help, not participating will not affect your care.

Fundraising

If you wish to raise money for IBD please contact Ms. Gerri Shesgreen Funding Office by email: g.shesgreen@st-vincent's.ie. Gerri runs the administration for the Centre for Colorectal Disease. Her salary, like ours, is paid by Government funds and all money raised for charity goes straight to frontline research. The Centre for Colorectal Disease is a registered charity. Please check out our website "[Centre for Colorectal Disease.ie](http://www.ccd.ie)". Any fundraising can be made through PayPal on the website or if you wish to run an event for IBD research Gerri would be happy to offer support. Otherwise donations can be sent to: Gerri Shesgreen, St. Vincent's University Hospital, Elm Park, Dublin 4. Please make cheques payable to Centre for Colorectal Disease Ltd.

Fast Facts

IBD CNS TELEPHONE: (01) 221 4711

IBD CNS EMAIL: denise.keegan@st-vincent's.ie
kathryn.byrne@st-vincent's.ie

GI secretaries' telephone: (01) 221 3531

Clinic appointments: (01) 221 6100 or (01) 221 6124

Dietician: Yvonne Hickey

IV therapy suite: (01) 221 3545

Endoscopy Unit: (01) 221 4416

Fundraising: g.shesgreen@st-vincent's.ie

Introduction to the Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) St Vincent's University Hospital

Helping you live well with a diagnosis
of Inflammatory Bowel Disease

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What is a Clinical Nurse Specialist?

A Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) is a member of the Gastroenterology team who has specialist knowledge of Crohn's disease & ulcerative colitis. The CNS has many roles within a multidisciplinary team (MDT) and is a link person between you and the rest of the team. St. Vincent's University Hospital has two Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Clinical Nurse Specialists: Kathryn Byrne and Denise Keegan.

What is the role of the CNS?

When you are first diagnosed with IBD, your CNS will provide you with a clear explanation of your condition. This includes information on diagnosis, the medications used to treat IBD and the possible effects of IBD on your daily life. Written information will be provided on IBD and any medications that have been prescribed. Details of the support group The Irish Crohn's and Colitis Society (ISCC) can be provided along with useful websites, such as www.getgutsy.ie

In addition the CNS provides ongoing support to patients with IBD using voicemail and e-mail. This service is there to help and guide patients who are experiencing problems with their condition. This may range from providing advice, to bringing forward a clinic appointment or, if more unwell, directing a patient to their GP or hospital for assessment or investigations.

Patients on certain medications need to have their bloods checked for several weeks after commencing these medications. Patients should contact the CNS the day after the blood test to receive the results.

Finally, patients should contact the CNS if they are experiencing any side-effects that they feel may be caused by their medications.

The CNS, working as a member of the gastroenterology team, ensures that patients receive the best possible care to help cope with the day-to-day effects of their condition, thereby improving quality of life.

How can you contact the CNS?

The telephone voicemail service is available between 9am and 4pm Monday – Thursday and 9am and 1pm on Friday. Patients should call **(01) 221 4711** and leave a message, clearly stating full name, date of birth and, if possible, hospital number, along with a brief message and contact details. The CNS will return calls as soon as possible.

Alternatively, patients can e-mail the CNS at kathryn.byrne@st-vincent's.ie or denise.keegan@st-vincent's.ie E-mails are checked early in the morning and again in the early afternoon on working days.

PLEASE NOTE THE ADVICE LINE IS NOT AN EMERGENCY SERVICE. In case of emergency patients should contact their GP or local emergency department.

What happens if I become unwell?

People with IBD occasionally experience worsening of their symptoms, known as a 'flare' of their disease. Patients who are having a 'flare' you should call the voice mail at **(01) 221 4711** and leave a message or send an email. The CNS will call back to discuss symptoms and may ask patients to attend for blood tests or send stool samples for analysis. If necessary, clinic appointments may be brought forward.



What if I become unwell after hours, at night or weekend?

Patients who become unwell or are concerned outside of office hours should contact their GP or local emergency department.

Outpatients

The Gastroenterology Outpatient Department is situated in the Herbert Wing of St. Vincent's University Hospital. Gastroenterology Clinics are held four days a week Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The majority of patients with IBD will be seen on Wednesday mornings; however IBD patients may also be seen in other clinics if required by the Consultant.

What if I cannot attend or need to change my appointment?

Patients will be sent a text message to remind them of upcoming appointment. Clinics can be extremely busy and if the date is not suitable patients should call **(01) 221 6100 or (01) 221 6217** ASAP to reschedule your appointment. Once seen at clinic, a doctor or CNS will decide when a next visit is necessary. Patients need to make this appointment before leaving the hospital.

Who do I contact for letters to support medical card applications or other letters?

All applications and forms for health and/or social welfare benefits must be brought to a General Practitioner to be completed. The Gastroenterology service can only provide a letter of support, if required by the relevant government department. If patients require such letters you should call the Gastroenterology secretary at **(01) 221 3531** and leave your name and details. Letters can be written, signed by the medical team and sent back to you.