

Crohn's disease

Source: <https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en>

Crohn's disease causes inflammation and irritation in the gastrointestinal tract, most commonly in the end part of the small intestine (ileum). Unexplained abdominal pain, diarrhea, rectal bleeding, weight loss and fever are all symptoms of Crohn's disease and are very similar to those of ulcerative colitis.

Your doctor will likely perform a physical exam to evaluate your condition and use blood and stool tests to look for signs of bleeding and rule out other underlying causes, such as infection. You may also undergo flexible sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, body CT, body MRI, MR enterography, upper GI, small bowel follow-through, or lower GI to confirm a diagnosis. No cure exists for Crohn's disease, but your doctor may prescribe medications, surgery or a special diet to help manage your condition.

What is Crohn's disease? How is Crohn's disease diagnosed and evaluated? How is Crohn's disease treated? Which test, procedure or treatment is best for me?

What is Crohn's disease?

Crohn's disease is a type of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) that causes inflammation and irritation in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. It occurs most commonly in the end part of the small intestine, called the ileum.

The most common symptoms of Crohn's disease are abdominal pain, often in the lower right abdomen area, and diarrhea. Other symptoms include:

- Rectal bleeding
- Weight loss
- Fever

Symptoms of Crohn's disease result from an inappropriate activation of the immune system. The causes are unknown, but there is evidence that genetics plays a significant role.

The symptoms of Crohn's disease are very similar to those of ulcerative colitis, except that Crohn's disease can happen anywhere along the digestive tract, from the mouth to the anus, while ulcerative colitis is restricted to the large bowel (colon). Crohn's disease may lead to deep ulcers in the intestinal tract, giving a "cobblestone" appearance. Inflammation can lead to a buildup of scar tissue over time, slowing the movement of food through the intestine and causing severe cramps.

Crohn's disease can affect both children and adults. Approximately 20 percent of those diagnosed have symptoms before age 20.