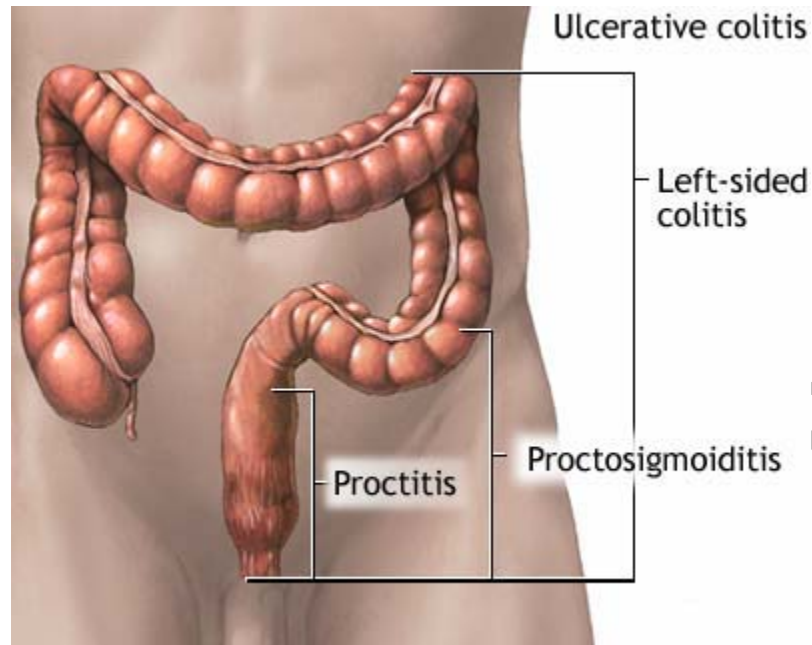


## Colitis



Colitis is an inflammation of the colon or large intestine. There are two types of colitis: mucus and ulcerative. Mucus colitis is a common disorder of the large bowel, producing discomfort and irregular bowel habits. Chronic ulcerative colitis is a severe prolonged inflammation of the colon or large bowel in which ulcers form on the walls of the colon, resulting in the passing of blood stools with pus and mucus. Both forms of colitis are the results of prolonged irritation of the delicate membrane which lines the walls of the colon.

Normally, it is the function of the colon to store waste material until most of the fluids have been removed to enable well-formed soft stools, consisting of non-absorbable food materials to be passed. Persons who suffer from an irritable colon have irregular and erratic contractions which are specially noticeable on the left side.

### **Symptoms**

Chronic ulcerative colitis usually begins in the lower part of the bowels and spreads upwards. The first symptom of the trouble is an increased urgency to move the bowel, followed by cramping pains in the abdomen and bloody mucus in the stools. As the disease spreads upwards, the stools become watery and more frequent and are characterized by rectal straining. All this loss of blood and fluid from the bowels results in weakness, fever, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite and anemia.

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The patient may develop a bloated feeling because the gas is not absorbed or expelled normally. Some patients suffer from constipation alternating with period of loose bowel movements. Still others may suffer from a persistent diarrhea for years together. The patient is usually malnourished and may be severely underweight. He may suffer from frequent insomnia. Ulcerative colitis in its severe form may also lead to nutritional problems. The improper assimilation of the ingested foods due to inflammatory conditions may cause deficiency diseases. This may gradually result in nervous irritability, exhaustion and depression. In very severe cases, the patient may even develop suicidal tendencies.

### **Treatment**

The usual treatment of colitis with suppressive drugs is based on the assumption that colitis is due to germ infection, which it is not. The suppressive drugs drive back into the system the toxic matter in the colon which nature is endeavoring to eliminate in the form of mucus. They suppress the symptoms temporarily, without removing the cause. In such cases, the symptoms recur and colitis becomes chronic. Plain warm water or warm water with a little olive oil used as a wash-out is the only method of softening and removing the accumulations of hardened matter sticking to the walls of the colon.

Diet plays an important part in the treatment of colitis. It is advisable to observe a juice fast for five days or so in most cases of ulcerative colitis. The juices may be diluted with a little boiled water. Papaya juice, raw cabbage and carrot juices will be especially beneficial. Citrus juices should be avoided. The bowel should be cleansed daily with a warm water enema.

After the juice fast, the patient should gradually adopt a diet of small, frequent meals of soft cooked or steamed vegetables, rice, dalia (coarsely broken wheat), well ripened fruits like banana and papaya, yogurt and home-made cottage cheese. Sprouted seeds and grains, whole meal bread and raw vegetables may be added gradually to this diet after about 10 days. All food must be eaten slowly and chewed thoroughly.

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Foods which should be excluded from the diet are white sugar, white bread and white flour products, highly seasoned foods, highly salted foods, strong tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages and foods cooked in aluminum pans.

Ripe bananas are highly beneficial in the treatment of ulcerative colitis, being bland, smooth, easily digested and slightly laxative. They relieve acute symptoms and promote the healing process.

An effective remedy for ulcerative colitis is the use of butter- milk. It is the residual milk left after the fat has been removed from yogurt by churning. Buttermilk enema twice a week is also soothing and helps in re-installing a healthy flora in the colon.

Another valuable remedy for colitis is tender coconut water, it is soothing to the soft mucosa of the colon. Cooked apple also aids the healing of ulcerative conditions because of its ample concentration of iron and phosphorous.

The patient should have a bowel movement at the same time each day and spend 10 to 15 minutes in the endeavor. Straining at stools should be avoided. Drinking two glasses of water the first thing in the morning will stimulate a normal bowel movement. An enema may be used if no bowel movement occurs.

Complete bed rest and plenty of liquids are very important. The patient should eliminate all causes of tension, adjust to his disability and face his discomfort with patience.

### **Reference**

Shri H.K. Bakhru. (1999). Natures Cure.