

IBD Discussion Guide

Discovering you have Inflammatory Bowel Disease can be overwhelming, both physically and emotionally.

We know that Inflammatory Bowel Disease isn't easy to talk about, but opening up with your doctor is the surest way to get the care you need to see real, meaningful improvements in your condition. And make no mistake: Today's care **can** generate improvements. There are more therapies, medications and procedures than ever, with success rates that should encourage you to reach out to a healthcare professional today.

Of course, once you do, it's important to know what to ask – the right questions can help your doctor in the diagnostic process, they can guide the treatment path you follow, and they can make sure that you're comfortable, confident and fully informed along the way.

Here's a list of questions that will make for a more productive consultation – and don't be afraid to take notes when you discuss them with your doctor so you don't forget anything:

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

- What could be causing my symptoms?
- What tests do I need to take?
- Are there things I can do on my own to help improve my condition – diet, exercise or behavioral changes?
- How will my condition progress without treatment – will it get better, worse or stay the same?

TREATMENT-RELATED QUESTIONS:

- What types of treatment options are available?
- How effective are these treatment options? (Discuss the potential benefits of all options)
- What are the risks and side effects associated with these options? (Discuss the risks of all options)
- How does the treatment work?
- For medications, how am I supposed to take them (morning/evening, with/without food, etc.)? Are there any drug/food interactions I should avoid?
- How long should I expect to be on this treatment? Is it permanent or temporary?
- How will my condition progress if I follow this treatment – will it get better, worse or stay the same? And how quickly can I expect to see results?

SURGERY-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

- Can you explain what the procedure is?
- Is it in-office or does it require a hospital stay?
- Will I be under general or local anesthesia?
- How long is the recovery period?
- Will I be limited in what I can do during recovery?
- What will the end results be – will I have to make lifestyle changes?
- What are the risks?
- What is follow-up like?
- Will this procedure ever have to be re-done?
- Is this procedure covered by my insurance?

EMOTIONALLY-FOCUSED QUESTIONS:

- Will the treatment/medication affect my mood?
- Can stress/anxiety play a role in my condition?
- What do you recommend to manage stress/anxiety?

1-800-BLADDER
www.NAFC.org