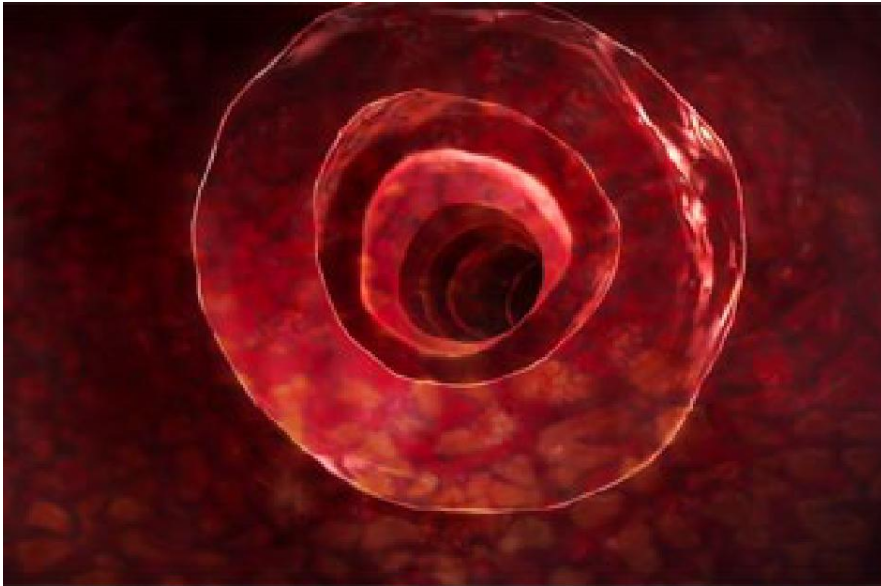




Ulcerative Colitis



Overview

This is a chronic disease that affects your large intestine. With it, your intestine becomes inflamed. And sores we call "ulcers" form on your intestine's inner walls.

Causes

We aren't sure what causes ulcerative colitis. It may be linked to your genes, or to something in your environment. It may be linked to an overactive immune system in your intestines. Some people say they have flare-ups when they eat certain foods, or when they are under stress.

Symptoms

Ulcerative colitis tends to start gradually, but it gets worse over time. It can cause diarrhea, and pain in your abdomen. You may feel the urgent need to have bowel movements, and you may see blood or pus in your waste. You may feel tired. You may lose your appetite, and begin to lose weight. You can have fever, and a loss of red blood cells we call "anemia." Some people experience joint pain, soreness, eye irritation and rashes.

Treatment

Ulcerative colitis can't be cured, but it can be managed. Medications and dietary changes help. You may also benefit from surgery. Your doctor will create a care plan that's right for you.