IBD and Psychosocial Considerations

EVE NGUYEN, PH.D.
PEDIATRIC PSYCHOLOGIST
Outline

Brief overview of role of psychology in IBD Multidisciplinary Clinic

Psychosocial Effects of IBD
  ◦ Depression, Anxiety

Optimizing Coping with IBD

Addressing Transition

Psychosocial Interventions for Youth with IBD

Resources for Families
It's an adjustment process ...

- Denial: Change? What Change?
- Disillusionment: I can see myself in the future
- Gradual Acceptance: I'll make this work if it kills me!
- Moving Forward: This can work and be good
- At Others: Can I cope? At last something's going to change! What impact will this have? How will it affect me?
- Happiness: This is bigger than I thought!
- Anger: Did I really do that? Who am I?
- Anxiety: Atself
- Fear: Threat
- Guilt: Depression
- Hostility: Complacency


Rady Children's Hospital - San Diego
Psychology Services

- Coping with a new or existing diagnosis of IBD
- IBD-related stress and pain management
- Staying involved in school, activities and social life
- Decreasing anxiety, mood or behavior concerns
- Overcoming fears about swallowing pills, receiving shots/injections, medical exams, or other medical procedures
- Following an IBD treatment plan
- Support with transition to adult medical providers
Psychosocial Effects of IBD

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low self-esteem/self-efficacy
- Lower quality of life
- Poorer social functioning
Depression

Increased risk for behavioral emotional challenges, depression rates up to 25%

Triggers:
- Physical symptoms, particularly chronic pain
- Poor body image (steroid induced weight gain)
- Distress secondary to school absences or loss of social opportunities
Anxiety

Youth with IBD are at higher risk for anxiety

Triggers for anxiety:
- Needle/ injection phobia
- Pill swallowing
- Anticipatory pain
- Discussing or disclosing IBD diagnosis
- Unpredictable disease course/ Flaring
Optimizing Coping with IBD

**Individual**: working to actively work through situational distress (e.g., diagnosis or flare related) vs. extended periods of impaired functioning

**Social**: decreasing social withdrawal, peer challenges, limited participation in social activities, school attendance

**Family**: positive family coping and stress management

**School**: 504 optimization, anticipatory guidance with transitions
Transition and “Graduating” to Independent IBD Management

Gradual, developmentally appropriate, individualized

Autonomy in health care typically develops later than autonomy in other developmental areas

Parents are critical stakeholders

Provide anticipatory guidance and frequent communication about transition
Evolving Roles of Parents

Stepped approach towards transition skills acquisition:

- Observation
- Partial participation
- Managing tasks independently with prompting
Evolving Role of Youth

Childhood

Middle childhood/early adolescence

Adolescence

Young adulthood

Care Receiver

Care Participant

Care Manager

CEO
Interventions

- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)
  - Relaxation techniques
  - Visualization and guided imagery
- Gut-directed hypnotherapy
- Biofeedback
- Enhancing positive family communication
- Support groups
Resources for Families

Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation: The foundation is aimed at finding a cure for Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis, and offers education programs for patients and healthcare professionals, as well as supportive services for patients and families. [www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/](http://www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/)

The North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition (NASPGHAN): The largest society in the world focused on research, education, clinical practice, and advocacy for pediatric digestive, hepatologic, and nutritional disorders. [https://www.naspghan.org/](https://www.naspghan.org/)

GI Kids: The patient outreach and education effort of NASPGHAN, aimed at promoting awareness and research of pediatric digestive and nutritional disorders. [https://www.gikids.org/](https://www.gikids.org/)

[https://www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/mental-health/resources-and-references](https://www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/mental-health/resources-and-references)

[https://societyofpediatricpsychology.org/bowel_disease](https://societyofpediatricpsychology.org/bowel_disease)