

## What to expect from psychology?

Once referred to the psychology service, you are likely to be offered an assessment session in which you will be asked about your experience of IBD, your current difficulties and the impact that this has had on your life. A plan would then be agreed between you and your therapist, based upon your hopes and goals. Sessions usually last about 50 minutes and can be via video, telephone or in person at St Helens hospital (determined by your circumstances and preferences). There are a range of therapies that could be offered to help.

### Useful contacts

Crohn's and Colitis UK - A charity that supports people diagnosed with IBD. Website - [www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/](http://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/)  
Contact number - 0300 222 5700

Rolling Crohn's IBD support group – A patient led Facebook group for people with IBD and their relatives under the care of St Helens and Whiston hospitals. This is a private group that can only be viewed by members.

**Clinical Psychology Department**, Orange Zone, St Helens Hospital  
Telephone: 01744 646864. More information can be found about our department by scanning this QR code.



St Helens Hospital  
Marshalls Cross Road,  
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA  
Telephone: 01744 646864

[www.MerseyWestLancs.nhs.uk](http://www.MerseyWestLancs.nhs.uk)



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## Psychological support for people living with inflammatory bowel disease

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

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Department: Clinical psychology  
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Diagnosis with crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis (the most well-known forms of IBD) can be a difficult process. Although there can be some relief that you have an explanation for the symptoms, you are also faced with the challenge of managing a long-term condition.

Coping with the symptoms, investigations and treatment for IBD can be demanding. IBD can have a considerable impact on people's lives, particularly during flare ups. For example it can:

- Impact work, education, social life, relationships and finances
- Involve continual adjustment to your diet
- Make it difficult for you to do things you enjoy
- Leave you in physical pain or discomfort
- Leave you feeling tired or fatigued
- Result in changes to body image, self-esteem, role or identity
- Result in unpleasant side effects from treatment.

### Emotional impact of IBD

Understandably the demands of living with IBD and its treatment, may impact upon how you feel emotionally. It is common to feel angry, anxious, embarrassed, guilty, low and stressed amongst many other emotions. There is no right or wrong way to feel and these emotions may come and go. Often these feelings will get better over time or you will feel more able to manage them.

Common concerns reported by people living with IBD include:

- Uncertainty about daily life, symptoms, or future health and treatment.
- Feeling that others do not understand your illness
- Embarrassment over uncontrolled symptoms
- Feeling that you are doing everything "right", but still experience flare-ups
- Coping with fatigue
- Managing pain
- Difficulties gaining or maintaining employment
- Living with a stoma and perceptions of body image
- Concerns about relationships and physical intimacy
- Worries over loss of bowel control, particularly in unfamiliar environments
- Difficulty discussing your illness due to embarrassment or due to others feeling uncomfortable.

### Accessing support

If you find that the emotional impact of IBD is beginning to interfere with your daily life, you can discuss this with your nurse, GP or consultant. They can provide support, and discuss the options that are available in your area. This might include: local support groups, counselling services or psychological therapy. There is a clinical psychology service for people living with IBD who are under the care of the IBD team at St Helens and Whiston hospitals. Your nurse, GP or consultant can refer you to us.