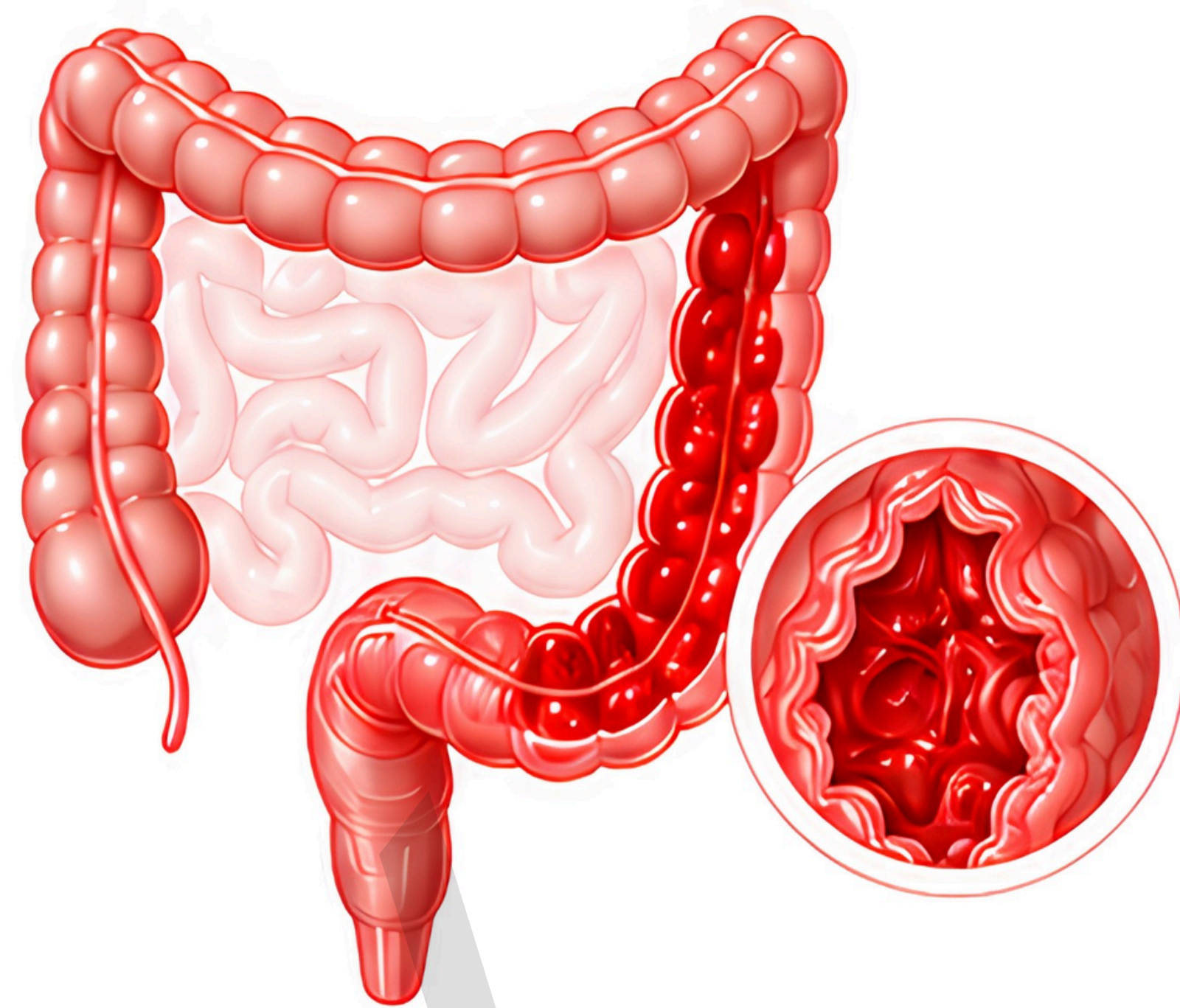


PATIENT EDUCATION CONTENT

Ulcerative Colitis

ULCERATIVE COLITIS

A chronic inflammatory bowel disease that causes inflammation and ulcers in the colon and rectum.



DEFINITION

Ulcerative colitis (UC) is a long-term inflammatory condition that causes inflammation and sores in the lining of the large intestine (colon) and rectum. It leads to flare-ups and remission periods.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Diarrhea, often with blood or mucus
- Unintended weight loss
- Abdominal pain and cramping
- Loss of appetite
- Rectal bleeding
- Fever during flare-ups
- Urgent need to pass stool
- Anemia due to blood loss
- Fatigue and weakness

CAUSES

- Abnormal immune response attacking the colon
- Genetic factors (family history)
- Environmental triggers such as infections or lifestyle factors
- Changes in gut bacteria (microbiome)

TYPES OF ULCERATIVE COLITIS

- Proctitis**
Inflammation limited to the rectum.
- Left-sided Colitis**
Inflammation in the left side of the colon.
- Extensive Colitis**
Inflammation extends beyond the left side of the colon.
- Pancolitis**
Inflammation affects the entire colon.

RISK FACTORS

- Family history of UC or IBD
- Age 15–35 years (commonly), any age
- Certain ethnic backgrounds (Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry)
- Environmental factors – diet and lifestyle
- Previous gastrointestinal infections

DIAGNOSIS

- Medical history and physical examination
- Blood tests (anemia, inflammation)
- Stool tests (rule out infections)
- Colonoscopy with biopsy (most accurate)
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy
- Imaging tests (CT scan or MRI if needed)

TREATMENT

- Anti-inflammatory medications (5-aminosalicylates)
- Corticosteroids for short-term flare control
- Immunosuppressants
- Biologic therapies
- Small-molecule medications for moderate to severe disease
- Nutritional support & dietary modifications
- Surgery (removal of the colon) in severe cases or when medications fail



PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT

- Take prescribed medications regularly
- Eat a balanced, nutritious diet
- Identify and avoid foods that trigger symptoms
- Manage stress through relaxation techniques or exercise
- Attend regular medical checkups
- Stay hydrated and maintain a healthy lifestyle



NOTE: There is no cure for ulcerative colitis, but early diagnosis, proper treatment, and healthy lifestyle can help control symptoms and improve quality of life.

