

Wellbeing support in Inflammatory Bowel Disease



Mental health and wellbeing

Living with a long-term condition such as Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) can have a significant impact not only on your physical, but also on your mental wellbeing. You may experience a range of feelings and emotions, including anxiety, frustration, anger and hopelessness. Sometimes it can all feel quite overwhelming, and this may have an impact your daily life. There may be periods when you find it more of a struggle, which is very natural (e.g. at diagnosis, during a flare, after surgery, as well as treatment side effects). You should allow yourself space and time to accept your feelings.

It's useful to understand both your condition and mental health, and how they can affect each other. There is communication between your gut and your brain. Gut inflammation and chemicals can affect how you feel. Similarly, certain emotions can amplify your gut symptoms.

Being aware of things that can cause stress and learning what works for you can hugely impact your mental wellbeing, and enable you to get appropriate help. No matter where you are in your IBD journey, there are numerous services which can offer support. This leaflet provides a selection of local and national organisations which offer different types of help.

Remember that your GP and IBD medical and nursing teams are also there for you too, every step of the way. So please don't hesitate to get in touch with them.



IBD specific

Crohn's and Colitis UK (CCUK)

crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

UK's leading charity which offers a wealth of reading material on IBD. Its helpline provides support for a range of topics and signposts to other services. It also runs online social events.

Crohn's in Childhood Research Association (CICRA)

cicra.org

A charity which provides a range of information to support children and adolescents with Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis, and their families. This includes managing with school, having surgery and transitioning into adult care. It also offers an 'E-pal' email scheme and local meet-ups.

The Wren Project

wrenproject.org

An organisation which offers free 1-to-1 fortnightly talking therapy by phone or video for people diagnosed with autoimmune conditions, including Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis. Sessions run for three months with the option for a further three. Volunteers are supported by medical professionals.

Considering IBD surgery?

Ileostomy and Internal Pouch Association (IA)

avon.iasupport.org (local group: Avon)

A support group for people considering surgery, which is run by those with first-hand experience. Its 1-to-1 support service aims to put you in touch with a volunteer whose experience matches yours as closely as possible. They have had surgery themselves and can lend a listening ear. This can be face-to-face, by telephone or email.

General support

BaNES IAPT/Talking Therapies

iapt.awp.nhs.uk/talking-therapies-banes

Available to those with a registered GP in Bath and North East Somerset. It offers free weekly 1-to-1 or group talking therapy sessions, which can be either online or in person. Typically, six to sixteen sessions are offered.

You can also sign up for free online courses and workshops.

Bath Mind

bathmind.org.uk

A local organisation which offers a low-cost twelve-week counselling course.

Safe Space is an additional free peer support group for young people aged 16-25. The group meets online via Zoom on Thursdays 5.30-7.00pm and there are also monthly in-person socials.

BaNES Wellbeing College

wellbeingcollegebanes.co.uk

You can sign up for a range of free online and in-person courses. These include mindfulness, meditation, yoga and emotional freedom technique.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

bacp.co.uk

A national directory to search for private, registered therapists. Individual fees and wait times vary.



Bath Centre for Psychotherapy and Counselling

bcpc.org.uk

A local directory to search for private, registered therapists. Individual fees and wait times vary.

Hub of Hope

chasingthestigma.co.uk/hub-of-hope

A free national mental health online search engine, which brings charities and services together into one place.

Every Mind Matters

nhs.uk/every-mind-matters

An online resource with tips on looking after your mental wellbeing.

Samaritans

samaritans.org

If you are feeling emotionally overwhelmed, you can contact the Samaritans 24/7 on 116 123 for free.

If you have thoughts of suicide or harming yourself, speak to someone you trust, or call the NHS on 111, or call the Samaritans, or go to your nearest emergency department.

We are here to help

You can contact the IBD team on 01225 825598 or ruh-tr.ibd@nhs.net

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.

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