

## How can I tell how I am doing?

### Keeping track of how you are doing

Your doctor will want to check on how you are doing from time to time. In general, here are some things you can do on your own:

- See your doctor from time to time, even if you are feeling well.
- Ask questions and tell your doctor if you are worried about anything when you visit.
- Tell your doctor if there have been any changes since your last visit. Try using the symptom self-assessment (below) before you go.
- Take your medicine, even if you're feeling well. If you want to change your treatment, discuss this with your doctor before doing so on your own.
- Talk to your doctor about your medicine and how you are taking it. Be sure to check with him or her before taking any over-the-counter medicines (eg, NSAIDs or painkillers), herbal remedies or dietary supplements, as these may affect how well your medicine works or may affect your symptoms.
- Exercise regularly and eat a healthy diet



In between doctor visits, it is important that you follow your management plan and know what to do if a problem comes up.

If you have any of these problems, contact your doctor as soon as possible:

- Blood in your poo
- Changes in poo that last for more than 10 days
- Strong belly cramps or pain
- Very runny poo (diarrhoea) or bloody diarrhoea
- Weight loss with no known reason
- Unexplained fever lasting more than 3–4 days
- Feeling very tired (fatigue)
- Not feeling hungry (loss of appetite)
- Feeling sick to the stomach, dizzy or throwing up for no known reason (nausea or vomiting)

### Parent-child activity

It can be hard to put into words exactly how you have been feeling, especially when you are sitting with the doctor answering questions. You may find it helpful to go through this worksheet with your mum or dad before you go to see the doctor, so you are ready to answer your doctor's questions during the visit. You can print it out and bring it with you. Remember, it is important that you tell the truth so your doctor can make the best decisions possible about your care.

## How are you feeling?

### 1. Overall, how have you felt?

Pretty good / A little worse than usual / Bad / Very Bad / Terrible

### 2. Have you missed school/sports/other activities? Yes / No

How many days in the last week?

How often has your illness kept you from going out with friends or family?

Have you had to spend any days in bed? If yes, how many?

When were you last unwell from your Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis?

### **3. Symptoms - have you had any of these problems?**

Not eating **Yes / No**

Feeling sick to the stomach **Yes / No**

Throwing up **Yes / No**

Very tired **Yes / No**

Sores inside the mouth **Yes / No**

High temperature (fever) **Yes / No**

Pain or soreness in joints **Yes / No**

Loss of weight **Yes / No**

Feeling very sad or down **Yes / No**

### **4. Belly pain?**

None / Mild / Moderate / Severe

If you had belly pain, how often?

Where is the pain?

#### **Tips to try for cramping/ gas/ wind:**

- It may help to adjust your diet and avoid 'gassy' foods such as baked beans, onions, cabbage and whole grains. Also try cutting out hot spicy food and fruit or vegetable skins. Think about any food intolerances such as milk or wheat. It may also help to eat less high-fibre foods such as nuts, seeds, corn, popcorn and various Chinese vegetables. However, it is important to eat a balanced diet. If cutting out a food doesn't help, then reinstate it later.
- Try eating smaller meals (5–6) throughout the day rather than fewer (2–3) larger meals.
- Try to take a 30-minute break after eating to digest your food.

### **5. Poo**

Number per day

Solid **Yes / No**

Runny **Yes / No**

#### **Tips to try for managing runny poo (diarrhoea):**

- Try not to eat high fibre foods or spicy, hot or refrigerated foods, unripe or dried fruit or fried food. Try not to drink anything with caffeine in it.
- Try chicken and rice soup, carrot soup, zinc and vitamin A supplements as they may also help.
- Your doctor may suggest trying other medicines such as anti-diarrhoeal drugs (eg, loperamide), antispasmodic drugs, bulking agents or bile salt drugs to help slow down your bowels. If you are feeling unwell, however, check with your doctor before taking any medicines, even those available over-the-counter.
- Remember to drink as much as possible.

Any blood? **Yes / No**

Do you have to use the toilet at night? **Yes / No**

Do you feel the need to go but can't? **Yes / No**

Have you had any mistakes? **Yes / No**

### **6. Medications**

What medicine(s) are you taking? **Yes / No**

How often do you take your medicine? **Yes / No**

Has it helped? **Yes / No**

Have you had any problems with your medicine? **Yes / No**

How often do you miss taking your medicine? **Yes / No**

How happy are you that your medicine is helping you? **Yes / No**

Are you taking any over-the-counter medicines, dietary supplements, herbal remedies or complementary medicines? **Yes / No**