

## Ulcerative Colitis – Kids and teens

### What is a treatment management plan?

A management plan is a special map just for you about ulcerative colitis. It helps you understand your illness and what you can do to keep it under control. You can use it to keep track of how you are doing and to know what to do if you have a problem. Your doctor creates the plan with you to include instructions such as:

- Your medicine and how and when to take it
- When to check back with your doctor to tell him or her how you are doing
- What signs to watch for, and what to do if you have any of them
- What your doctor will do if you become unwell
- What else you can do to help – such as change what you eat, get more exercise or take medicine for any other problems caused by your illness
- How to find other people who can help, such as a nurse or support group in your area

Your plan should be written down so you can keep it with you and read it any time you want. Your doctor will probably look at it and change it from time to time if anything changes.

Other people may also help create and follow your plan, like a nurse, nutritionist, surgeon, general practitioner or pharmacist. Your parents, and possibly other people who are also involved in your care, such as your teachers, childminders or other carers will also know about your plan and help you follow it.

### Your turn to create a map!

[Click here](#) to draw a map of your day. Start with waking up and getting dressed. Do you go to school? Do you play with friends after school? Draw signs with reminders along the way. Add in anything you do to help manage your ulcerative colitis too. Can you see how a map can help you plan ahead and know what to do if you have a problem?

### For parent information [click here](#)

#### For the parent:

Drawing a map can be used to help your child understand the purpose of having and following a plan. Point out how reminders can help you get past difficult tasks, and how you can make decisions ahead of time so you know what to do when the time comes. Talk through the map with your child and then explain how a management plan works in a similar way to help manage your child's ulcerative colitis.

#### How will my management plan help me?

Think about the map you drew in the activity above. Imagine you are on a bumpy road, with twists and turns and maybe a couple of hills to climb. What sort of problems might you run into as you go through your day? What can you do to get past them?

Your management plan is sort of like your map. It can help you and your parents and carers get past the bumps in the road as well as the smooth stretches along the way. Most importantly, it shows how you and your doctor are working together to get you feeling better and stay better as long as possible. It can also help you remember why you need to take your medicine and take good care of yourself.

#### You and your doctor make a great team

Your doctor is there to make sure you get the right medicine, and to look after your health and well-being. Sometimes this is your family doctor or paediatrician, and other times this might be someone who cares for people with Crohn's disease, called a gastroenterologist. Some hospitals also have nurses who care for people with Crohn's disease and are able to answer your questions and look after you too.

You and your family should work with all your healthcare team members - your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, surgeon — to make sure your management plan is right for you. The more questions you

ask, and the more open and honest you are about your needs and wishes, the more helpful the plan will be for you.

### **Take care of yourself**

Once you have a management plan, you have an important job — to keep it and follow it. Your family can help. Here are some things you can do to help:

- Understand that you play a role in keeping your ulcerative colitis under control
- Know when and how to take care of your own health
- Follow your plan and take your medicine as your doctor tells you to
- Ask questions if you are worried about anything
- Let someone know if you have any problems

### **Your turn!**

Write down some more things you can think of to do to help keep in control of your illness. For example, get enough sleep, get regular exercise and take your medicine every day. If you need help thinking of more things you can do, ask your mum or dad for some more ideas.

### **For parent information [click here](#)**

This activity is designed to help your child understand his or her role in managing ulcerative colitis and focus on what can be changed rather than what cannot. Examples include general healthy living: for example, getting enough rest, regular exercise and taking medicine as prescribed.

In general, children should get about 60 minutes of exercise a day. Eating healthily is also important. Getting enough rest and taking medicine as prescribed by the doctor are just a few more examples.