

# Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) and Mental Health

Information for patients

You are not alone – we are here to help

 **IBD Nurse advice-line: 0131 537 1272**

When living with IBD it can be easy to prioritise looking after your physical symptoms, but coping with a long-term condition can impact your mental wellbeing too. Almost half of people with IBD say it has affected their mental health, and for some this can worsen symptoms. You might have lots of different feelings and emotions. You may feel anxious, frustrated, scared, guilty or angry. These feelings are completely normal. Many people struggle with some of the following issues:

- The condition being unpredictable
- Social embarrassment or changing plans
- Regular pain and fatigue
- Anxiety for the future
- Body image
- Sex and intimacy.

It's important to talk to your IBD Nurse or Doctor who can refer you to information and support. Some things you could do to improve your mental wellbeing are:

- Keep your IBD under control by taking your medicines regularly
- Talk to others – it can help to find a community of people who know what you are going through
- Try regular exercise or relaxation
- Get some help – speak to us, try out some apps and look through the resources below.

## Useful resources

**Crohn's and Colitis UK:** information and support - **0300 222 5700**

[www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/mentalhealth](http://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/mentalhealth)

**Breathing space:** a confidential phone line if you need to talk to someone - **0800 83 85 87**

[www.breathingspace.scot/](http://www.breathingspace.scot/)

**Beating the blues:** you can get a referral from your GP for their online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) course - [www.beatingtheblues.co.uk/](http://www.beatingtheblues.co.uk/)

**Thistle:** For support for living with a long term health condition - [www.thistle.org.uk](http://www.thistle.org.uk)

**Mood Cafe:** Information and resources about mental health - [www.moodcafe.co.uk](http://www.moodcafe.co.uk)

**Mind:** a leading UK mental health charity - [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

**Samaritans UK:** A free helpline if you want to talk to someone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year - **116 123**  
[www.samaritans.org/](http://www.samaritans.org/)

