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## CROHNS DISEASE

### What is Crohn's disease?

Crohn's disease is an inflammatory bowel condition. There is inflammation of the lining of the bowel. It can affect any part of the bowel from the mouth to the anus.

### What causes Crohn's diseases?

Generally the cause is unknown. There are various theories from infection, autoimmune and genetic abnormalities.

### Which parts of the bowel are most affected?

- 30% large bowel
- 30% small bowel
- 30% both small and large bowel
- 50% also have anal disease

### Who treats Crohn's disease?

Most patients are managed by gastroenterologists not surgeons. Colorectal surgeons are involved with specific surgical problems.

### What are the symptoms?

The symptoms depend of which part of the gut is affected. There might be diarrhoea, bleeding, passage of mucus and abdominal pain. Sometimes there are urgent problems like severe bleeding, bowel obstruction or extension into other organs (fistula). Anal conditions present with abscesses, fistulae and fissures.

### What is the treatment?

Mostly the treatment is medical drugs administered by gastroenterologists. Surgery is required for complicated disease and emergencies. Treatment is multidisciplinary with cooperation between surgeons and gastroenterologists.

### What sorts of operations are required?

This depends on the presentation and which part of the bowel is affected. Sometimes a section of the bowel needs to be removed and sometimes a stoma bag is needed.

### Can Crohn's disease be cured?

No. Even after removal of a part of the bowel the disease often returns. Medical treatment is usually required long term