

**How to complete your own
Simple Clinical Colitis Activity
Index.**

**A guide for patients with
Ulcerative Colitis.**



Ulcerative Colitis (UC) is a chronic condition. This means that although it may not be active, it is always with you.

UC mainly causes inflammation of the colon, but other organs can be affected including the joints, eyes and skin.

Specific symptoms.

Inflammation of the lining of the colon will cause you a mixture of symptoms.

- You will empty your bowels more frequently.
- You may have little warning (i.e. urgency).
- You may pass blood.

Depending on how much of the colon is affected you might also experience tiredness, weight loss, fever, abdominal cramps or pain.

Some patients also experience symptoms in other parts of their body.

- Inflammation of the eyes may cause, redness, blurred vision or pain.
- Skin involvement may show as rashes which could be red or purple in colour and can be painful.
- The joints can also be affected causing swelling and pain. This most often occurs in the knees, but can also affect other joints such as the elbows, hands and ankles.

Treatment.

Medicines are very effective in treating Ulcerative Colitis and keep 75% of patients symptom-free.

A wide variety of types of medications can be used to control the inflammation. Some are tablets, some are enemas and some are injections under the skin or into a vein.

Surgery is also necessary in some cases.

Treatment of recurrence of your symptoms (called a 'flare') may differ from that used to keep your colon in good health.

Early and appropriate treatment has been shown to shorten flare-ups and be better for you in the long term.

How to measure the activity of Ulcerative Colitis.

We can get information about how active your condition is in a number of ways.

Your doctor may examine you, do blood tests, stool tests, x-rays or look inside at the lining of your colon (called a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy).

In addition your doctor will ask a set of questions to get a detailed idea of how your condition is. These set of questions have been put together to make the ***Simple Clinical Colitis Activity Index***, which is an internationally recognized measure of Ulcerative Colitis.

What can you do?

It will help both you and your doctor if you use the answers to the same questions to monitor your condition. That way the best treatment can be started at the right time.

An explanation of how to complete these questions is set out on the next few pages.

We suggest you complete the Simple Clinical Colitis Activity Index if;

- you think your condition is getting worse (a 'flare')
- before your next appointment with your medical team.

The Simple Clinical Colitis Activity Index.

This next section takes you through the 5 questions that make up the Simple Clinical Colitis Activity Index.

Answer according to the symptoms you have over the *past 3 days*.

1. (a).

How many bowel motions have you been passing during the daytime, i.e. from waking up till going to bed to sleep for the last 3 days?

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 1-3 times | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 points |
| 4-6 times | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 point |
| 7-9 times | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 points |
| > 9 times | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 points |

1. (b).

How many bowel motions have you been passing during night time, i.e. after going to bed, for the last 3 nights?

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 1-3 times | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 point |
| 4-6 times | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 points |

2. What degree of Urgency of defecation do you experience?

i.e. When you feel the need to open your bowel, how quickly do you need to go?

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| I have no urgency at all (i.e. just as normal) | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 points |
| I have to hurry to the toilet | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 point |
| I have to go immediately | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 points |
| I have incontinence (unable to control the urge and had an accident) | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 points |

3. How much blood has been in your stool?

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| None | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 Point |
| Trace – (a hint or a tiny amount) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 point |
| Moderate (occasional obvious/frank blood) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 points |
| Severe (Usually obvious/frank blood) | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 points |

4. General well being – How do you feel about your general health?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Very well | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 point |
| Slightly below par | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 point |
| Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 points |
| Very poor | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 points |
| Terrible | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 points |

5. Do you have any of the following symptoms apart from your bowels?

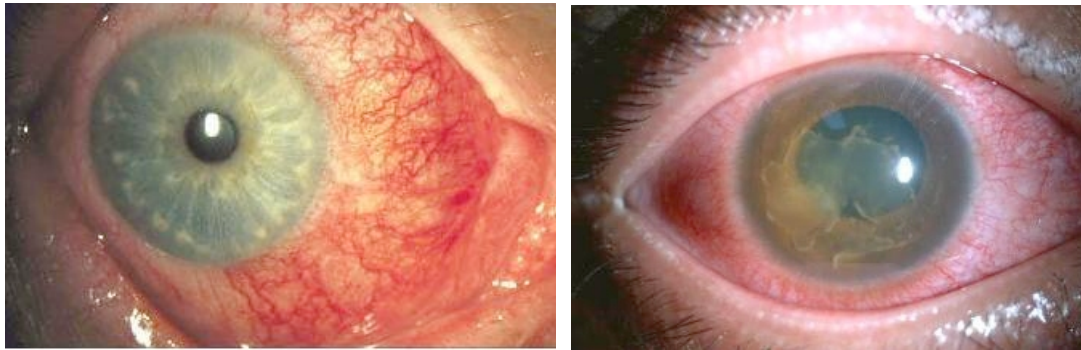
(a). **Joint problems**; have you had painful, red or swollen joints?
The most common joints affected are the knees, ankles or toes.

1 point

(b). **Eye problems**; have you had sore, red and swollen eyes?.

Other symptoms include blurry vision, sensitivity to light, floaters or increased tear production?

*

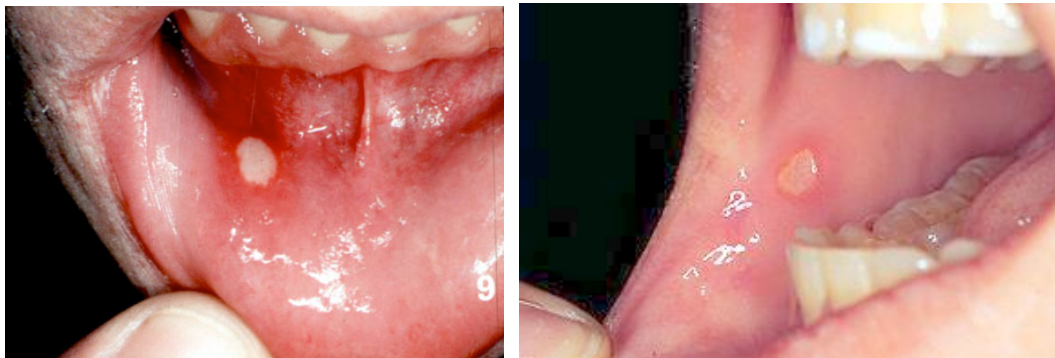


1 point

Note: If you have a **painful red eye** or if you have been diagnosed with **uveitis**, **episcleritis** or **scleritis** and recognize a flare of your symptoms. **Seek medical help urgently.**

(c). **Mouth problems**; The most common problems are round or oval mouth ulcers which usually appear as round yellowish elevated spots surrounded by a red halo.

**



1 point

(d). Skin problems:

Do you have any deep, purple ulcers, often painful, which usually develop suddenly ?

**



1 point

Do you have any tender, hot and red bumps which most often affect the skin on the shins, arms and legs ?

**



1 point

(e). Perianal problems.

Do you have any tears or breakdown (crack/ cleft) in the skin of the anus or tender lumps (abscesses) surrounding it?

1 point

Your Simple Clinical Colitis Activity Index Score is the sum of all the points added together.

• Your **Total Score** : _____

Contact numbers and useful links:

Your IBD specialist nurse;

Tel:.....

Fax:.....

Email:.....

Your specialist doctor;

Tel:.....

Fax:.....

Email:.....

Acknowledgments,

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* www.atlasophthalmology.com

** GastroHep. www.gastrohep.com

*** Dr. Blair Wood.

This leaflet is endorsed by:

• The New Zealand Society of Gastroenterology (<http://www.nzsg.org.nz>)

• Crohns & Colitis New Zealand (<http://crohnsandcolitis.org.nz>).



R S Walmsley et al. A Simple Clinical Colitis Activity Index. *Gut* 1998;43:29-32

SMOG score 14.5 (<http://www.niace.org.uk/misc/SMOG-calculator/smogcalc.php#>)