

Microscopic Colitis

The under-diagnosed condition which mainly affects women

700 %

Women are **700% more likely to have microscopic colitis than men.**

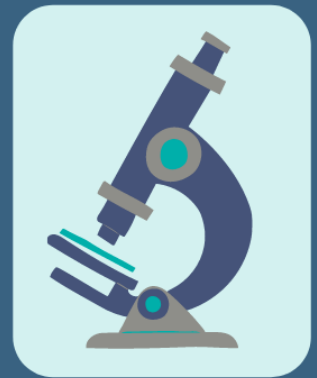
Microscopic colitis is an Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD). This group includes Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis too.

One way IBD can be diagnosed is by an endoscopy (a small camera looking at your digestive system). In Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, the inflammation may be seen on camera.

Microscopic colitis cannot be seen on camera.

A sample of tissue (biopsy) has to be taken of the bowel and looked at under a microscope.

This step is not always completed, so many people are left undiagnosed.

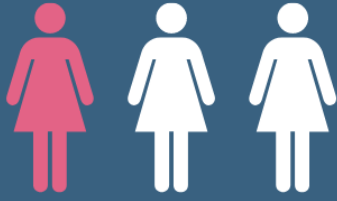


Symptoms include:

- Persistent, frequent and watery diarrhoea
- Stomach pain
- Fatigue
- Waking in the night to empty the bowel
- Urgency to empty the bowel

info@gutscharity.org.uk • 0207 486 0341
gutscharity.org.uk

Symptoms of microscopic colitis can mimic those of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).



In fact, one study showed that 1 in 3 patients with microscopic colitis were incorrectly diagnosed with IBS initially.

There are 17,000 new cases of microscopic colitis diagnosed each year. The real number is thought to be much higher, as microscopic colitis is often misdiagnosed.

87.5% of those diagnosed with microscopic colitis are female, most of whom are diagnosed between 50-70 years old.



More research needs to be undertaken to determine the reasons behind this gender disparity.

Although microscopic colitis is under-diagnosed, once diagnosed, there is an effective treatment for most people.

Treatment for microscopic colitis is often life-changing.



Because many people develop microscopic colitis aged between 50 and 70, many women put their symptoms down to the menopause. But it's really important to get a professional diagnosis.

Do not suffer with your symptoms alone or in silence. Seek help from your GP, or contact Guts UK for information.

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