



Fast Facts about Crohn's Disease and Colitis

June 2014

About Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD):

- Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) is the collective term for Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.
- IBD is a chronic and largely hidden disease affecting approximately 1 in 250 people aged 5 – 49 nationally.
- Australia has one of the highest rates of prevalence and incidence in the world and each year more and more young people are being diagnosed.
- Over 75,000 Australians have Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis (and more than 5 million worldwide have the disease).
- The number of Australians with IBD is expected to rise dramatically within the next ten years with numbers set to rise to 100,000.
- Research estimates that national total hospital costs for IBD are approximately \$100 million per annum. (PwC, *'Improving inflammatory bowel disease care across Australia'*, March 2013)
- Productivity losses attributable to IBD in 2012 are estimated at over \$360 million. An additional \$2.7 billion of financial and economic costs have been associated with the management of IBD (PwC report as above).
- Crohn's disease is incurable and is associated with a 47% increase in the mortality risk.
- Ulcerative Colitis is only 'curable' through radical surgery and if untreated may also lead to death.
- Typical symptoms include the frequent and urgent need to use the toilet, diarrhea, bleeding, loss of appetite, fatigue and weight loss.
- IBD is more prevalent than, Multiple Sclerosis and Rheumatoid Arthritis. (2007 Deloitte Access Economics)

- IBD is commonly diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 35 years, and can cause significant disability and lengthy absences from school and workplaces.
- It is not contagious or caused by stress or diet.
- Medications can reduce the inflammation, but surgery is often required to remove diseased portions of the intestine or treat complications.
- A proper diet can help relieve symptoms and replace lost nutrients.
- IBD is NOT the same as IBS or irritable bowel syndrome and is much more serious.
- Many people are confused about two distinct gastrointestinal disorders -- IBD and IBS. Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a condition that produces some symptoms similar to those of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), but they are not the same condition, and they involve very different treatments.

About Crohn's & Colitis Australia™ (CCA)

- CCA is the national peak body representing people with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis in Australia.
- May is Crohn's & Colitis Awareness Month.
- CCA's mission is to support the Crohn's and colitis community with a focus on confidential support programs, including education, advocacy, counselling, increasing awareness and generating and utilising funds for research and programs.
- CCA's Helpline receives more than 1000 calls a year.
- More than 2000 people attend CCA IBD information forums around Australia every year.
- CCA is a registered not-for-profit national organization that until recently received no government funding. It is funded almost entirely through membership fees, donations and fundraising activities.
- In 2013, CCA was awarded a \$50K grant to commence a Volunteer Outreach Program in Victoria only. In May 2014, it was announced CCA had been successful in our application for a second grant of \$50K to further expand our outreach program in rural and regional Victoria.
- In December 2014, the Federal Government awarded CCA a \$500,000 grant for a program to improve IBD care, with the expectation that CCA would secure an equivalent amount from the philanthropic and corporate communities.