

Cheasa Crump

Anatomy & Physiology II

Crohn's Disease

Crohn's Disease is a gastrointestinal disorder which causes inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract. The disease can affect any portion of the gastrointestinal tract ranging from the mouth to the anus. However, the disease most commonly affects the ileum. The disease causes the affected organ to swell and causes pain and swelling. The swelling and pain causes diarrhea which results from the intestines emptying frequently. The disease affects both men and women and can run in families. Persons between the ages of 20 to 30 are most often affected. African Americans are at a decreased risk for developing the disease whereas Jewish people have an increased risk for developing the disease.

Causes

There isn't any evidence that supports a particular cause of the disease. However, there have been many theories about the cause of the disease. It is believed that there is an abnormal reaction in the immune system in those who have the disease. It is believed that bacteria, foods, and other substances are foreign to the body. Research does prove that inflammation seen in the gastrointestinal tract involve several factors: genes, immune system, and environment. Scientists have found abnormal levels of protein produces by the immune system.

Symptoms

Persons with Crohn's disease display symptoms of abdominal pain in the lower right quadrant, rectal bleeding, diarrhea, weight loss, and arthritis, fever and skin problems. Those

who have the disease may have persistent bleeding which leads to anemia. Children with the disease may have delayed development and growth.

Diagnoses

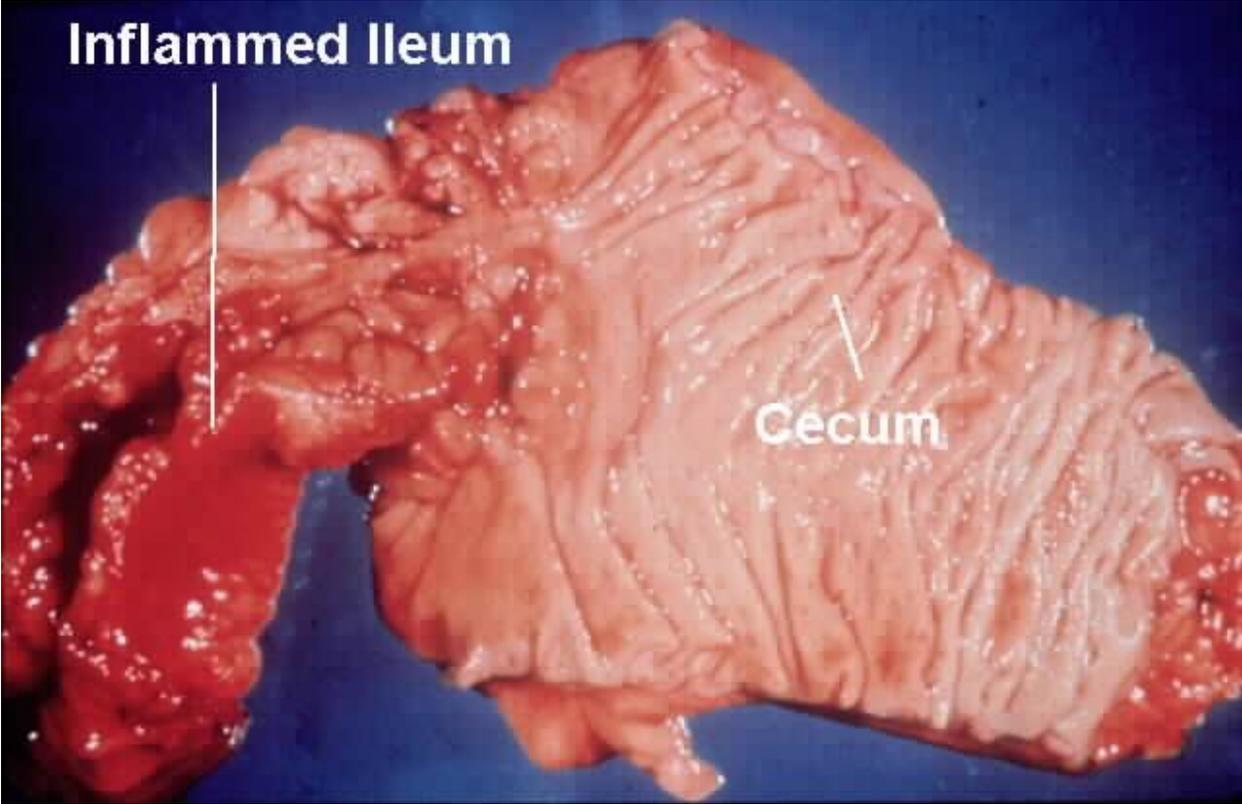
A series of tests and a thorough physical exam is necessary to diagnose Crohn's disease. Blood tests with test white blood cell count, stool samples, x-rays, sigmoidoscopy and colonoscopy are all tests used to diagnose the disease. Biopsies may also be done.

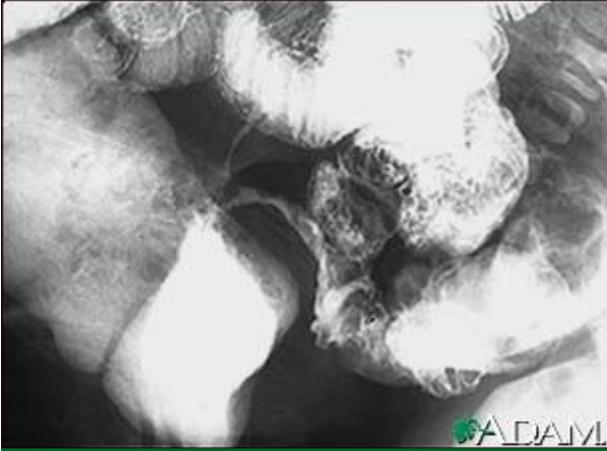
Complications

Blockage of the intestine is the most common complication. The intestinal becomes thick with swelling and scar tissue. The disease can also cause sores, and ulcers to the bladder, vagina, or skin. Nutritional complications include protein deficiencies, and malabsorption. The disease can also cause arthritis, skin problems kidney stones, gall stones, inflammation in the eyes or mouth and disease of the liver.

Treatment

Treatment includes medication, nutritional supplements, surgery, or a combination of these. Those diagnosed with the disease may need long term medical care and regular visits to the doctor in order to monitor the condition.





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References

www.LivingWithCrohnsDisease.com

digestive.niddk.nih.gov/diseases/pubs/crohns

www.mayoclinic.com/health/crohns-disease/DS00104