



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY

6400 Goldsboro Road, Suite 450, Bethesda, MD 20817-5846; 301-263-9000; Fax: 301-263-9025

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Contact:
Anne-Louise Oliphant, ACG
mediaonly@acg.gi.org
Rosanne Riesenman
301-263-9000

New Study Shows Gender Bias in Impact of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) on Women's Personal and Professional Lives

Another Study Finds Equal Risk for Osteoporosis in Male/Female IBD Sufferers

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, October 23, 2006— Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) has a negative impact upon patients' educational, professional, and personal lives, according to a study presented at the 71st Annual Scientific Meeting of the American College of Gastroenterology in Las Vegas. IBD causes long-term inflammation of the intestines and affects more than 600,000 Americans each year. Common forms of IBD include Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

One hundred patients (57 female, 43 male) with IBD participated in the study. Patients were asked to fill out a questionnaire that measured the impact IBD had on their school, work, and home lives. They also completed questionnaires that measured how sick they were (disease activity scales) and quality of life. Each patient completed the questionnaires five times over the course of a year's time to determine if they had a change in their answers in response to their disease improving or worsening.

Russell Cohen, M.D. and his colleagues from the University of Chicago found nearly 50 percent of patients reported a work productivity decline and more than 50 percent reported poor work attendance. 36 percent were not working, 42 percent were unemployed, 23 percent on disability and 5 percent retired early due to IBD. 46 percent required family or hired help for child-care, cooking or cleaning. 79% of students reported IBD impacted attendance, performance and/or career/job/schooling location or choice.

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Inflammatory Bowel Disease – New ACG Studies/2

The study also showed women had more compromises of their career choice/job location, lower work attendance, missed more opportunities for professional advancement, and were less likely to seek a promotion. Women were more likely to be on disability and require assistance with childcare and basic household activities. They also scored poorly on quality of life issues.

Dr. Cohen says this research should serve as a wake-up call to health care professionals, insurance companies, and government health care policy makers. “The impact of being sick with IBD translates into disturbing limitations on educational, professional, and personal issues, at a cost to society that can no longer be ignored. Economic decisions regarding patient care must include these important issues in the equation.”

IBD Increases Risk of Osteoporosis in Both Men and Women: Testing Urged for Both Genders

In a separate study, Marie Borum, M.D., FACP, and colleagues from George Washington University evaluated whether patient gender influenced physicians' adherence to bone mineral density testing (BMD) in IBD patients. The medical records of 131 women and 96 men were evaluated. 38 patients (28 female and 10 male) had BMD testing performed. Researchers found that physicians inconsistently performed BMD testing despite recommendations. They also found that there is a trend to perform more BMD testing in women despite the fact that abnormal BMD tests occur at the same rate in men and women suffering from IBD. As a result of this study, Dr. Borum strongly recommends that all patients with IBD receive BMD tests.

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About the American College of Gastroenterology

The ACG was formed in 1932 to advance the scientific study and medical treatment of disorders of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. The College promotes the highest standards in medical education and is guided by its commitment to meeting the needs of clinical gastroenterology practitioners. Consumers can get more information on GI diseases through the following ACG-sponsored programs:

- 1-800-978-7666 (free brochures on common GI disorders, including ulcer, colon cancer, gallstones, and liver disease)
- 1-866-IBS-RELIEF and www.ibsrelief.org (free educational materials)
- 1-800-HRT-BURN (free brochure and video on heartburn and GERD)
- www.acg.gi.org (ACG's Web site)

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