

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY

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Gut Symptoms in the Global Spotlight for "World Digestive Health Day" on May 29

New Resource Center from the American College of Gastroenterology Addresses Common Digestive Troubles

Bethesda, Maryland (May 24, 2012) – The American College of Gastroenterology has created a special online resource center that features the College's wealth of scientifically-based education material and information, the latest related research from <u>The American Journal of Gastroenterology</u> and expert insight to help patients understand common gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms and how these symptoms should be appropriately treated and managed.

GI symptoms such as heartburn, indigestion/dyspepsia, bloating and constipation are among the most common but also among the most misinterpreted and their impact and significance misunderstood both by health care providers and patients, according the <u>World Gastroenterology Organisation</u> which has called on the international community of patient groups and gastroenterologists to observe <u>World Digestive Health Day</u> on May 29th through educational outreach on this year's health focus, "From Heartburn to Constipation - Common GI Symptoms in the Community: Impact and Interpretation."

In support of this global awareness effort, the ACG has identified a number of resources for those seeking evidenced-based information, treatment guidelines, as well as ACG expert answers to the most frequently asked questions and concerns about a range of common GI symptoms such as heartburn, diarrhea, abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhea, gas and bloating.

Access the ACG Common GI Symptoms Resource Center

"Many of these symptoms are experienced as the result of food intolerances or lifestyle factors, like inactivity, obesity, or smoking, but they can also be present in more than one GI condition such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome and in more serious GI diseases such as Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis and even later-stage colorectal cancer," explained ACG President Lawrence Schiller, M.D., FACG. "So it is vital that patients take them seriously and see their doctor to get an accurate diagnosis, rule out any serious condition, and get the proper treatment, especially if they are experiencing these symptoms regularly or if these symptoms are disrupting their overall well-being or daily life. "

ACG is committed to quality in patient care and the creation of this new online resource not only increases awareness about common GI symptoms but helps fulfills an important educational mission of the World Gasteroenterology Organisation, according to Dr. Schiller.

Latest Statistics for Some Common GI Conditions

In the United States:

- Chronic constipation affects 63 million people
- Hemorrhoids affect 75 percent of people older than 45
- GERD/Heartburn: 20 percent of the population experiences reflux symptoms at least weekly
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) affects 15.3 million people
- Peptic Ulcer Disease affects 1.4 million people

Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)

Physician Experts Available for Interviews

Please contact Jacqueline Gaulin at 301-263-9000 or igaulin@gi.org. ACG physician experts are available to provide insight on a variety of common GI symptoms as well as the latest research, and treatment guidelines. They are also able to address issues related to common GI symptoms such as:

- Recent scientific developments concerning food choice as a key management strategy for functional GI symptoms.
- The role of gut bacteria in gastrointestinal and non-gastrointestinal health
- Summer picnics, cook-outs and food-borne Illness: Tips for safe outdoor eating
- Non-gluten sensitivity: Trendy gimmick or Real deal

Please visit the <u>ACG's Common GI Symptoms Resource Center</u> for education information and expert resources, including audio podcasts and clinical guidelines.

About the American College of Gastroenterology

Founded in 1932, the American College of Gastroenterology is an organization with an international membership of more than 12,000 individuals from 80 countries. The College is committed to serving the clinically oriented digestive disease specialist though its emphasis on scholarly practice, teaching and research. The mission of the College is to serve the evolving needs of physicians in the delivery of high quality, scientifically sound, humanistic, ethical, and cost-effective health care to gastroenterology patients. www.gi.org Follow ACG on Twitter