

The silver lining of an inflammatory bowel disease diagnosis

October 19 2016

Twenty-five percent of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) patients are diagnosed as children or adolescents—at the peak of their social and educational development. Parents of newly diagnosed patients often inquire about the long term consequences of IBD on their child's health and lifestyle.

While there is understandably much anxiety associated with a new IBD diagnosis, children and parents should sleep easier knowing that adults with IBD, who were diagnosed during their childhood, are doing exceptionally well in terms of educational levels attained, annual income and marital status, according to a study published as an article in press in *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*(16)30857-6/abstract, the clinical practice journal of the American Gastroenterological Association.

"The anxiety associated with a new diagnosis of IBD is significant to both children and their parents," said lead study author Wael El-Matary, MD, MSc, FRCPCH, FRCPC, from the section of pediatric gastroenterology, departments of pediatrics, at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada. "We hope our findings reassure families dealing with this diagnosis. Knowing that long-term educational levels attained, occupation and marital status are not worse compared to those without IBD will significantly help in alleviating a great part of this anxiety."

The researchers conducted a cross-sectional analytical study looking at

adults diagnosed with IBD in childhood and adolescence between January 1978 and December 2007 at the Pediatric Gastroenterology Clinic at Children's Hospital, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. IBD patients were compared to age and sex-matched healthy adult controls. Participants were asked questions on educational achievements, employment and [marital status](#). They found that not only were patients with IBD more likely to earn more money per year than their healthy counterparts, but more of these patients went on to receive post-high school education.

"IBD is not an easy diagnosis. We recognize that it may take several years for patients to find a treatment regimen that works best for their disease, hence why we decided to revisit patients many years after their initial diagnosis when they, hopefully, are following a stable and effective treatment plan. What we found was hope at the end of the tunnel," added Dr. El-Matary.

More information: Wael El-Matary et al, Education, Employment, Income, and Marital Status Among Adults Diagnosed With Inflammatory Bowel Diseases During Childhood or Adolescence, *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology* (2016). [DOI: 10.1016/j.cgh.2016.09.146](#)

Provided by American Gastroenterological Association

Citation: The silver lining of an inflammatory bowel disease diagnosis (2016, October 19) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-10-silver-lining-inflammatory-bowel-disease.html>

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