Diagnostic delays common in inflammatory bowel disease
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(HealthDay) — Diagnostic delays are common in inflammatory bowel disease, with 68 percent of patients reporting a delay in diagnosis, according to a study presented at the 2019 Crohn's & Colitis Congress, held from Feb. 7 to 9 in Las Vegas.

Zane Gallinger, M.D., from Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, and colleagues assessed self-reported diagnostic delay and perceived reasons for delay in a validated online cohort of IBD patients. A total of 1,121 patients completed the surveys on delay in diagnosis.

The researchers found that 68 percent of IBD patients (757 patients) reported a delay in diagnosis, while 32 percent did not think there was a delay in their diagnosis. Of the patients reporting a delay, 63.9 and 48.1 percent reported a delay of more than one year and more than two years, respectively. Compared with ulcerative colitis patients, those with Crohn disease were more likely to report a delay of more than one year (70 versus 48 percent) or more than two years (52.2 versus 37 percent). When stratifying by gender or race, there was no significant difference in delay. Before receiving a diagnosis, patients reported seeing a mean of 3.5 physicians. The most common reason for delay was an uncertain or wrong initial diagnosis by a primary care provider or gastroenterologist (58.2 and 28.3 percent, respectively).

"Future studies are needed to identify ways to best mitigate diagnostic delay in IBD," the authors write.

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