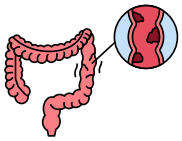


# IBD in the Workplace: Supporting Employees

## What Is Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)?

IBD is an umbrella term for chronic inflammatory conditions affecting the gastrointestinal (GI) tract.

**The two most common forms are:**



**Ulcerative Colitis (UC)**



**Crohn's Disease**

## What Are the Needs of Someone Living With IBD at Work?

While needs vary, there are some consistent themes. People living with IBD often benefit from:

### Predictable access to a washroom

Track your triggers and recognize early signs of a flare



### Flexible scheduling

Start times, breaks, remote options



### Understanding during symptom flares



### Energy management support

Especially with fatigue



### Privacy and psychological safety

Ability to work, live and socialize without fear of judgement or consequences due to unpredictable symptoms



## Did you know?



- In Canada, ~322,000 people live with IBD
- Rates are among the highest globally

## How Is IBD Treated?

### Medications to manage



- Anti-inflammatories
- Immunosuppressants
- Biologics

### Lifestyle factors



- Stress
- Sleep
- Physical activity

### Nutrition strategies



- Support gut health
- Reduce triggers

### Supplements



- Iron
- Vitamin B12
- Vitamin D

## IBD Symptoms

- Abdominal pain
- Chronic diarrhea
- Overnight bowel movement
- Rectal bleeding
- Bloating & gas
- Weight loss
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Anemia
- Anxiety
- Depression

One of the most disruptive symptoms is **bowel urgency**. In a work setting, this can:

Interrupt meetings or tasks

Anxiety about being away from a washroom

Limit participation in certain roles or environments

Lead to embarrassment or stigma

## How Can an Employer Support an Employee With IBD?

Support from employers can significantly impact both employee well-being and performance.



Effective support doesn't require major changes—it often comes down to **flexibility, understanding, and communication**.



## Practical Solutions to Navigate the Workplace With IBD For Employers:

**Normalize flexible work arrangements**

**Consider employee access to health benefits**

**Train managers on invisible illnesses**

**Focus on outcomes rather than rigid processes**

**Encourage a culture of trust and respect**

**Small, practical adjustments often lead to better productivity, reduced absenteeism, and improved quality of life.**



ORGANON

