# IBD Skin Symptoms: Are They Caused by Inflammation or Medication?

## WHY CAN IBD AFFECT THE SKIN?

The same immune activity that causes inflammation in the digestive tract may also affect the skin.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Skin changes affect about **15 - 20%** of people with IBD and can sometimes appear before digestive symptoms.

## WHAT SKIN CONDITIONS ARE LINKED TO IBD?

### Erythema nodosum



- Tender, raised bumps, often on the shins or lower legs.
- Can look red, purple, or darker than the surrounding skin.

### Pyoderma gangrenosum



- Rare, but more serious.
- Small bump or pustule and develops into a deeper, open sore.
- Common on legs or around a stoma.

### Associated conditions:

**Psoriasis**
Scaly, itchy patches, often on scalp, elbows, or knees.

**Hidradenitis suppurativa**
Recurring painful lumps, often in skin folds.

**Mouth sores**
Painful mouth ulcers inside the lips or cheeks

## CAN IBD TREATMENT ITSELF CAUSE SKIN REACTIONS?

Some IBD treatments, particularly **TNF inhibitors**, can cause skin reactions such as:



- Rashes
- Injection-site irritation
- Infections
- Psoriasis-like symptoms





A new rash doesn't always mean treatment needs to stop. Discuss any changes with your care team.

## NEW OR CHANGING SKIN SYMPTOMS?

**Keep Track of:**

**When it started,** and whether you recently started, switched, or changed the dose of a treatment

**Whether it appeared** after an injection or infusion

**Whether digestive symptoms were also flaring** at the same time

**Where it started and how it's behaving** - spreading, painful, itchy, blistering, or draining



### REMINDER!

Photos are especially useful, since a rash can look different by the time of an appointment.

## WHEN IS URGENT CARE NEEDED?

**Seek urgent medical care if:**

A rash spreads quickly, blisters, causes severe pain or fever, affects sensitive areas, or is accompanied by trouble breathing, swallowing, or facial swelling.

For the complete article, visit:
https://cdhf.ca/en/ibd-skin-symptoms-are-they-caused-by-inflammation-or-medication/

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