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Once you've narrowed it down, a cross-reference takes you to easy-to-follow descriptions of the condition at the back of the book. Potentially life-threatening situations and ailments that need urgent medical advice are clearly flagged. Fully illustrated throughout, the Visual Symptoms Guide is an invaluable reference.

How to reduce stool symptoms The following treatments for UC reduce inflammation that leads to stool symptoms: Aminosalicylates, which are drugs that target inflammation in the lining of the colon. Corticosteroids, which are powerful, fast-acting anti-inflammatories used to treat UC flare-ups. Immunomodulators, which are drugs that regulate the immune system. Biologics, which target inflammation in the gut. Treating diarrhea People with IBD should avoid taking antidiarrheal medications. Antidiarrheal drugs can increase the risk of a complication called megacolon, in which digestive gases become trapped in the colon, causing it to swell. In some cases, this can be fatal. The safest way to treat diarrhea is to make dietary changes. Many people with UC experience diarrhea after eating specific foods. Keeping a food diary along with a daily record of stool symptoms can help people identify and eliminate these trigger foods. Reducing blood in stools A recent study suggests that a prebiotic supplement may help reduce bloody stools and other symptoms of UC. Participants taking the prebiotics supplement experienced significantly decreased abdominal pain and cramping. They also reported reduced nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and blood in stools, although these effects were not statistically significant. The study was small, so more research is needed to determine the best way to reduce blood in stools. If a person frequently has bloody stools, a doctor may prescribe iron supplements to help prevent anemia. Other methods for relieving constipation include: Squatting while having a bowel movement: Sitting with the knees higher than the hips when using the toilet can help align the rectum, making stools easier to pass. Exercise helps speed up the movement of stools through the colon. Doctors may recommend osmotic laxatives for people with IBD. These increase water availability in the colon, which helps to soften stools. However, people with UC should talk to a doctor before taking laxatives, as these medications can increase wind and stomach cramps. Managing bowel incontinence Many people who experience bowel incontinence find it difficult to discuss the issue with a doctor. However, a doctor may be able to identify the underlying cause of a leaky bowel and can offer advice on how to control and manage this symptom. Some suggestions for managing bowel incontinence include: Bowel retraining People who experience a sense of urgency may benefit from delaying bowel movements. This technique is called bowel retraining. Although bowel retraining may be difficult at first. Over time, however, it will help build up strength and control over the rectum and sphincter muscles. Pelvic floor exercises The pelvic floor muscles support the pelvic organs, which include the bladder and bowel, as well as the uterus in women. Pelvic floor exercises can help strengthen the muscles around the anus, reducing incontinence. To find the pelvic floor muscles, imagine stopping a urine stream or practice while urinating. To perform pelvic floor exercises, contract and hold the pelvic floor muscles for a count of 3, and then relax the muscles, while slowly counting to 3. Avoid pushing out the muscle during the relaxation stage. Repeat this 15 times to complete one set of exercises. Aim to complete three sets each day. Summary People with UC may experience uncomfortable, inconvenient, and sometimes distressing stool symptoms. However, there is a range of treatments that can help those with UC to experience fewer and less severe symptoms. A person should discuss the options with their doctor to establish the most effective treatment plan.

Chapter 2 : Ulcerative colitis stool: Appearance, symptoms, and treatment

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