

During the COVID-19 pandemic, most patients with ulcerative colitis were satisfied with their health care but many experienced greater stress or anxiety

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This plain language summary has been prepared from an article published in *Advances in Therapy* titled *The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Patients with Ulcerative Colitis: Results from a Global Ulcerative Colitis Narrative Patient Survey*

Why did we need this research?



- The **COVID-19 pandemic** presented challenges for patients with ulcerative colitis (UC)
- We asked **patients with UC** to answer questions to **understand how the pandemic was affecting them**

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus comes to infect people. It can spread easily between people



UC is a long-term inflammatory disease where a person gets sores (ulcers) in the lining of their large intestine. This can lead to increased bowel movements, blood in stools, and stomach pain



How did we do this research?



- From August to December 2021, we asked patients with UC to answer survey questions about their experience during the COVID-19 pandemic

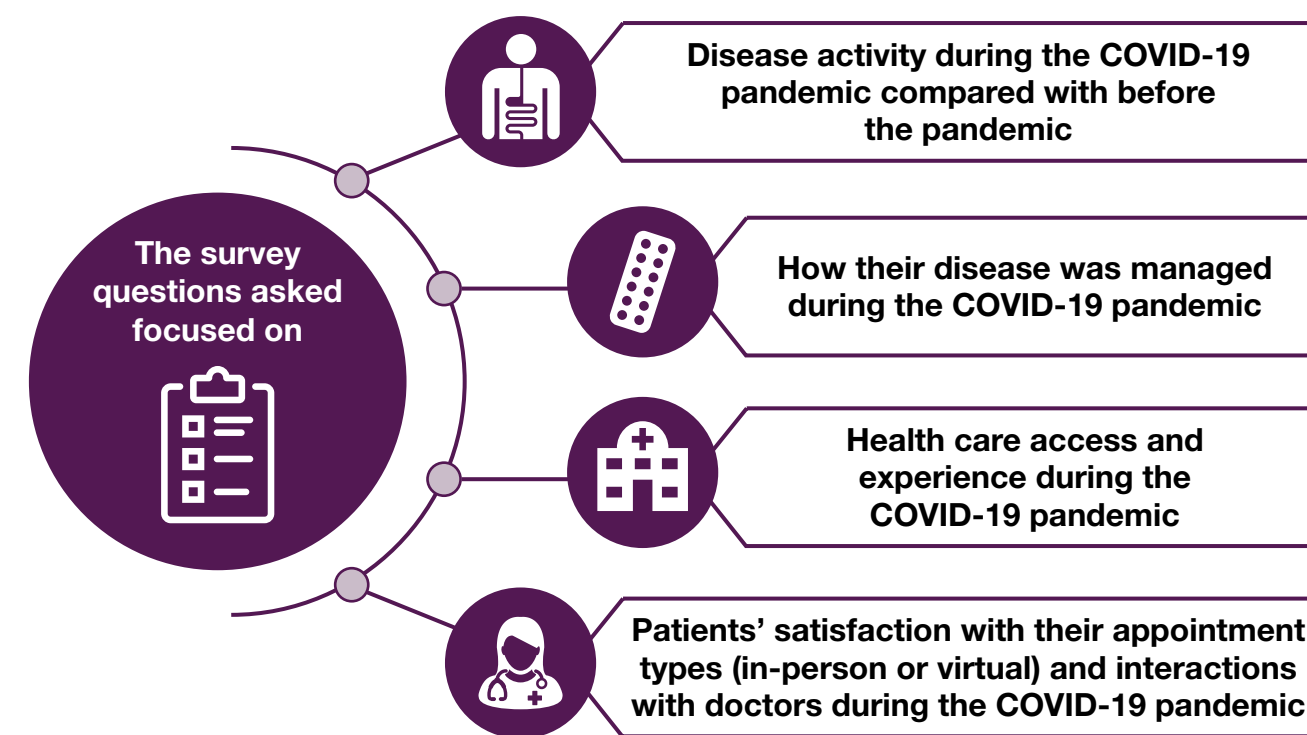


- Patients who took part:
 - Were aged 18 years or older
 - Had their UC confirmed by a scope
 - Had visited a UC specialist's office in the past 3 years
 - Had never had surgery to remove their large intestine
 - Were either taking UC prescription medication or had taken it in the past

Anyone who had only ever taken 5-aminosalicylate drugs (a treatment for UC) were excluded, as they were considered to have mild UC



- This study included 584 patients who lived in the United States, Canada, Japan, France, or Finland



What did we find?



Disease activity and patient profile during the COVID-19 pandemic

During the time of the survey within the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **25% of patients** (25 out of every 100) experienced a higher number of flares than in 2019
- **57% of patients** (57 out of every 100) felt that their overall health was good or excellent
- **64% of patients** (64 out of every 100) felt that their UC was in remission
- **88% of patients** (88 out of every 100) taking prescription medication were very or somewhat satisfied with their current treatment plan
- **56% of patients** (56 out of every 100) agreed that UC controlled their life, rather than them controlling their UC

A **flare** is a period of time where the patient has more severe UC symptoms than they would normally have

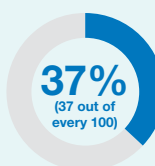
Being in **remission** means that patients' disease is controlled with few to no symptoms



Managing UC during the COVID-19 pandemic

Factors that helped control patients' UC symptoms during the pandemic included:

Having fewer social outings



Working from home



Being less busy



Factors that made UC symptoms more difficult to control during the pandemic included:

Having more anxiety or stress



Being hesitant to visit a hospital or office



The numbers shown are the percentages of patients who identified with each factor

During the time of the survey within the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **53% of patients** (53 out of every 100) agreed that they were hesitant to change their treatment plan
- **51% of patients** (51 out of every 100) worried about controlling their symptoms when life returned to normal after the pandemic



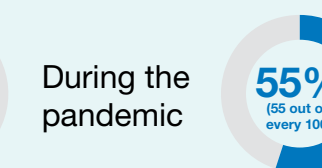
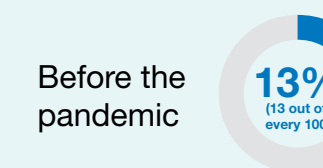
Managing UC during the COVID-19 pandemic compared with before the pandemic

During the time of the survey within the COVID-19 pandemic:

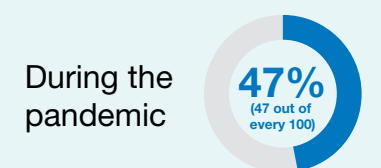
- **62% of patients** (62 out of every 100) agreed they were better at tracking their symptoms
- **47% of patients** (47 out of every 100) felt more alone in managing their UC

More patients did the following during the pandemic compared with before:

Had virtual appointments:



Used online patient portals:



Health care access, experience, and preference during the COVID-19 pandemic

During the the time of the survey within the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **79% of patients** (79 out of every 100) reported being very or somewhat satisfied with their access to health care when needed/required
- **81% of patients** (81 out of every 100) who used either in-person or virtual appointments were very or somewhat satisfied with the quality of care they received at each appointment type

The following percentages of patients preferred in-person appointments instead of virtual ones when:

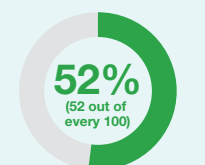
Meeting a new doctor



Having a flare



Having regular check-ups



- **41% of patients** (41 out of every 100) preferred virtual appointments instead of in-person appointments for their UC prescription refills

Why is this important?

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, most patients were satisfied with their treatment plan and health care access, but many patients experienced greater stress or anxiety



- More patients relied on support systems like virtual appointments. Patients were satisfied with the quality of care received during in-person and virtual appointments to the same level. Patients preferred in-person appointments except for prescription refills



- This information may help doctors understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on patients with UC. It may help develop treatment plans that include both in-person and virtual appointments



Additional information

This study was sponsored by Pfizer. This summary reports the result of a single study. The results of this study may differ from those of other studies. Health professionals should make treatment decisions based on all available evidence, not on the results of a single study. Medical writing support was provided by Sarah Leneghan, PhD, CMC Connect, a division of IPG Health Medical Communications, and was funded by Pfizer. M Segovia is an employee of The Medical Affairs Company and a former Postdoctoral Fellow of Rutgers University, which received funding from Pfizer in connection with the development of this plain language summary. The authors would like to thank the patients, investigators, and study teams involved in this study. The infographic plain language summary represents the opinions of the authors. For a full list of declarations, including funding and author disclosure statements, and copyright information, please see the full text online.