



Eosinophilic Gastritis (EG) and Eosinophilic Gastroenteritis (EGE)

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Eosinophilic gastrointestinal disorders (EGIDs) are rare conditions that affect the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. EGIDs can occur in infants, children, and adults. They are often identified by irregular food-related reactions. This occurs with a high number of eosinophils in the GI tract. Eosinophils are white blood cells linked with allergic-type reactions. Their exact role is not known, but they are part of the body's immune response. These cells release toxins that are harmful to the body. Inflammation occurs when these are active, which causes redness and swelling. Immune response is the body's ability to recognize foreign objects that might be harmful, such as bacteria and viruses. The body then destroys them by using specialized cells, eosinophils. EGIDs can occur in any area of the GI tract and are named to match the organs affected. People with EGID's may have more than one of these disorders.

Eosinophilic Gastritis (EG) and Eosinophilic Gastroenteritis (EGE)

EG occurs within the stomach. EGE occurs within both the stomach and small intestine. Eosinophils accumulate in these organs, causing redness, swelling, and injury to the tissue there. EG and EGE are most diagnosed in adults from 30 to 50 years of age. Like all EGIDs, EG and EGE can occur at any age.

Symptoms

- Nausea – a feeling of sickness with an urge to vomit
- Vomiting – bringing food back up from the stomach
- Difficulty eating and/or weight loss
- Poor growth (more common in infants and children)
- Abdominal pain – dull to sharp pain that occurs inside the belly, commonly in the stomach or intestines
- Anemia – low blood counts
- Fatigue – feeling low energy, overly tired

Diagnosis

The diagnosis of either EG or EGE is confirmed by an upper endoscopy. Biopsies are taken from the esophagus, stomach, and small intestine. A high number of eosinophils suggests a diagnosis of EG or EGE. A healthcare provider will consider all symptoms with the biopsy results. High numbers of eosinophils can be seen in other conditions such as celiac disease and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Treatment

Treatment of EG and EGE depends on how severe each person's symptoms are. The treatment goal is to reduce the damage, redness, and swelling caused by the disease. A healthcare provider will consider any other drugs the patient is taking.

- Dietary restrictions is one of the most common treatment options for EG and EGE. Food allergy testing may be used to find foods that are causing the increase in eosinophils. The results of this test are then used to develop restriction diets. This type of diet is used to find and eliminate foods that cause symptoms. IFFGD's Dietitian Listing is a resource that allows you to search for a dietitian that is in your area or treats a specific condition.

Many people need topical or systemic corticosteroids (see table) to ease symptoms. These drugs can cause long or short-term symptom improvement. Topical and systemic corticosteroids are man-made drugs. They mimic the hormones naturally found in the body. This

can help to control tasks in the body when there are not enough hormones present. One important task of these hormones is to minimize swelling.

About IFFGD

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