



Perioperative and Postoperative Management of Patients With Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis

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Although the number of available therapies for the treatment of ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease (CD) continues to expand, a significant portion of patients with inflammatory bowel disease will require surgical intervention. Surgery remains an integral part of the treatment algorithm for patients with ulcerative colitis and CD, and thus multidisciplinary approaches to the perioperative and postoperative management of patients with inflammatory bowel disease are critical to improving outcomes during these periods. New mechanisms of biologic therapies are emerging and new treatment strategies focused on earlier and potentially more aggressive use of immunosuppressive therapies are advocated in the current treatment era. In this review, we outline multidisciplinary strategies for the preoperative management of immunosuppressive therapies, including a discussion of the most recent evidence regarding the safety of biologic therapy in the preoperative period. We also discuss the postoperative medical management of patients undergoing intestinal resection for CD, with a particular focus on risk stratification and appropriate therapy selection in the immediate postoperative setting. Finally, we review potential postoperative complications after restorative proctocolectomy with ileal pouch-anal anastomosis and their management.

Keywords: Perioperative Therapy; Postoperative Crohn's Disease; Biologics; Pouchitis; Ileal Pouch-Anal Anastomosis.

Despite the emergence of novel strategies for the management of patients with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), it is well recognized that a significant proportion of patients with Crohn's disease (CD) and ulcerative colitis (UC) ultimately will require surgical intervention. Surgery should not be viewed as a failure of medical therapy; rather surgery should be considered an integral part of the multidisciplinary treatment algorithm of IBD. As such, optimal care pathways bring gastroenterologists and surgeons together to provide best treatment practices in the perioperative phase, surgical phase, and postoperative phase.

The lifetime risk for intestinal resection among patients with CD is 50% to 80%.¹ Unlike the reported decrease in colectomy rates for UC since the advent of biologic

therapy,² recent analyses have indicated that rates of intestinal resection in CD have not decreased significantly.³ Therefore, whether biologics appreciably change the natural course of disease among patients with UC or CD remains controversial. Regardless, because biologics increasingly are being used, greater proportions of patients are exposed to immunosuppression at the time of surgery, mandating an improved understanding of the perioperative management of immunosuppressive therapies to maximize postoperative outcomes. We herein outline multidisciplinary strategies for the preoperative management of immunosuppressive therapies, postoperative medical management of patients undergoing intestinal resection for CD, and postoperative complications after restorative proctocolectomy with ileal pouch-anal anastomosis (IPAA).

Managing the Perioperative Patient

Perioperative Pharmacotherapy

Immunomodulators. Immunomodulators (mercaptopurine, methotrexate, azathioprine) are used as a glucocorticoid-sparing agent for the maintenance of remission or in conjunction with biologic therapy to decrease secondary loss of response resulting from antibody formation. Fortunately, evidence from both large retrospective reviews and systematic reviews has suggested that the perioperative use of immunomodulators does not increase adverse postoperative outcomes.^{4,5} Given that the elimination half-life of mercaptopurine and azathioprine is approximately an hour, patients can be counseled to hold immunomodulators on the day of surgery and resume them on postoperative day 1.

Abbreviations used in this paper: anti-TNF, anti-tumor necrosis factor α ; CADP, chronic antibiotic-dependent pouchitis; CD, Crohn's disease; CLD, Crohn's-like disease; IBD, inflammatory bowel disease; IPAA, ileal pouch-anal anastomosis; N-RPFD, non-relaxing pelvic floor dysfunction; UC, ulcerative colitis.

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Biologics. Early reports highlighted significant controversy regarding increased postoperative complications among patients exposed to anti-tumor necrosis factor α (anti-TNF) therapy^{6–8} and vedolizumab in the preoperative period.^{9–11} Among CD patients, higher detectable anti-TNF levels at the time of surgery have been associated with increased complications.¹² Among UC patients, the use of anti-TNF therapy within 90 days of IPAA was associated with a significant increase in pouch complications, although there was no increased risk among patients undergoing colectomy or total proctocolectomy with end ileostomy.¹³ Despite early concerns regarding the perioperative use of vedolizumab,^{9–11} recent literature has reported a more favorable safety profile.¹⁴ Similarly, the use of ustekinumab was not associated with an increased risk of perioperative complications when compared with other biologic agents.^{15,16} The relationship between preoperative biologics and perioperative complications of IBD remains uncertain. The studies that identified a relationship between biologics and postoperative complications may have inherent indication bias. Specifically, it is conceivable that the postoperative complications were related more to the severity of IBD that presented the indication for the biologic therapy rather than the biologic itself.

Perhaps the most informative study evaluating the risk of complications in the perioperative period owing to biologics is the Prospective Cohort of Ulcerative Colitis and Crohn's Disease Patients Undergoing Surgery to Identify Risk Factors for Post-operative Infection I (PUCCINI).¹⁷ In this prospective cohort, 955 patients undergoing intra-abdominal surgery were evaluated for the development of any infection and surgical site infection. The rate of any infection was similar among those exposed to anti-TNF in the 12 weeks preceding surgery (19.4% vs 20.0%; $P = .80$), as was the rate of surgical site infection (12.4% vs 11.5%; $P = .70$). On multivariable analysis, current anti-TNF use and detectable anti-TNF levels at the time of surgery were not associated with an increased risk of any infection or surgical site infection, leading the authors of the PUCCINI study to conclude that the preoperative use of anti-TNF therapy was not an independent risk factor for postoperative infections. These findings suggest surgery should not be delayed and that a diverting ileostomy is not required for an intestinal CD resection in the setting of preoperative biologic exposure. Furthermore, delaying surgery in severe cases may increase the risk of complications, including mortality.¹⁸

Glucocorticoids. Before biologic therapy, corticosteroids were the cornerstone therapy for the treatment of IBD. Unfortunately, corticosteroid use has been associated with multiple postoperative complications including superficial surgical site infections, deep space infections, and anastomotic leakage.¹⁹ Limiting corticosteroid exposure in the perioperative period by reducing the intraoperative stress dose²⁰ and rapidly tapering when

possible (ideally to a prednisone dose of <20 mg/d at the time of surgery) may improve postoperative infectious complication rates.

Perioperative Nutrition

Among CD patients, low albumin levels are a significant risk factor for intra-abdominal septic complications.²¹ In addition, poor nutritional status has a well-documented impact on postoperative morbidity and mortality in multiple disease states.²² In the preoperative period, enteral nutrition approaches are preferred if a patient is able to maintain their energy and protein requirements (Figure 1).²³ If malnutrition is diagnosed, then IBD-related surgery may need to be delayed until intensive artificial feeding can be initiated.²² In the postoperative period, the introduction of early enteral nutrition within 24 hours of surgery may be associated with improved outcomes.²⁴

Surgical Decision Making

Although an ileocolonic resection with ileocolonic anastomosis remains the most common surgical approach for patients with CD, a diverting ileostomy may represent a viable and necessary surgical approach in some patients. In a temporary ostomy, the fecal stream is diverted in an effort to promote distal healing, with an ultimate goal to restore intestinal continuity. This may occur in settings of frank perforation, long segments of distal disease, and as an alternative to colectomy as rescue therapy in severe refractory UC and CD-related colitis²⁵ and refractory perianal disease. Although fecal diversion can be effective in more than 60% of patients with perianal disease, a recent systematic review reported sustained perianal healing after restoration of intestinal continuity to be successful in only 17%.²⁶ Predictors of successful restoration of bowel continuity are limited, but include improvement in rectal inflammation.²⁷

Other times, after an ileocecal resection, a diverting loop ileostomy and end ileostomy may be constructed to protect the anastomosis, and allow for restoration of intestinal continuity at a later date when both the bowel and overall health of the patient is improved. There are no specific guidelines as to when a patient may benefit most from diversion, and conflicting risk factors of intra-abdominal sepsis have been reported, thus surgeons often are left to their own subjective and anecdotal evidence as to who they consider high risk and warrant diversion. However, a few retrospective studies consistently have shown that in the setting of multiple risk factors (corticosteroids, biologic therapy, and multiple prior resections),^{28,29} patients are at a significantly increased risk for developing intra-abdominal sepsis. In these scenarios a diverting ileostomy may be useful.^{28,29} Until better scores predicting anastomotic leak are constructed, the decision will be left largely to the bias of the

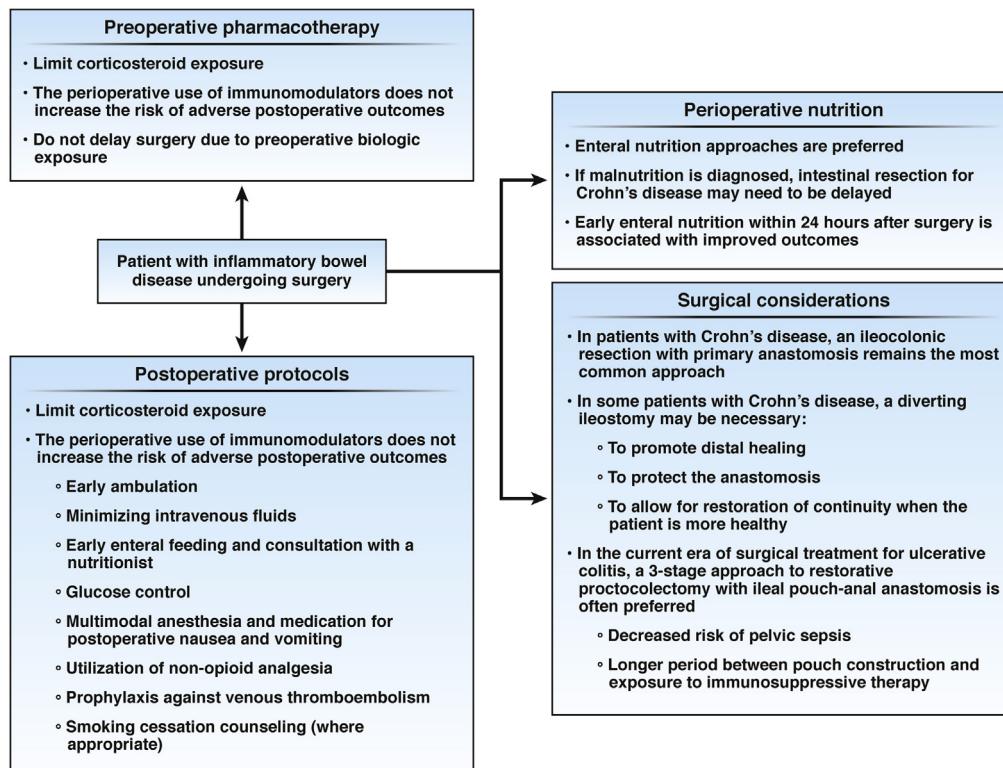


Figure 1. Multidisciplinary considerations for the perioperative management of patients with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis.

practicing surgeon and their personal experience related to bowel wall disease, patient disease severity, and an individual patient's ability to tolerate a leak based on their overall health state.

Immediate Postoperative Period

Enhanced recovery pathways, or enhanced recovery after surgery, are standardized protocols that increasingly are being used by colorectal surgeons owing to faster patient recovery, decreased overall morbidity, and decreased cost.^{30–32} These pathways were studied more recently in IBD patients specifically, and have shown decreased postoperative superficial surgical site infection, anastomotic leaks, and ileus after implementation of hospital-wide surgical care bundles to prevent postoperative infections and enhanced recovery pathways.³³ Although each hospital system may have a slightly different protocol for enhanced recovery pathways or bundle to prevent surgical site infection,³⁴ in general,

enhanced recovery after surgery protocols focuses on limiting fluids intraoperatively, limiting opioid pain medications by giving regional pain blocks and a cocktail of nonopioid pain medication, minimally invasive surgical approaches, early transition to a normal diet, fast removal of any catheters, and early ambulation. In addition, a focus on the prevention of venous thromboembolism is critical,³⁵ given the vulnerability of postoperative patients owing to decreased mobility and disease activity.

The Postoperative Management of Crohn's Disease

Disease Recurrence

Although surgery effectively can address symptoms of complicated CD, it is not curative, with up to 90% of patients showing endoscopic recurrence in the neoterminal ileum by 12 months after surgery. Within 3 years, endoscopic recurrence is essentially ubiquitous,³⁶ and by 5 years clinical recurrence is present in up to 50% of patients.³⁷ Perhaps most concerning, a repeat intestinal resection is required in 25% of patients within 5 years and in 35% of patients within 10 years.³⁸

Although no validated risk score has been identified for the prediction of postoperative recurrence of CD,³⁹ several risk factors have been identified. These include a history of penetrating disease phenotype, 2 or more prior CD-related surgeries, and current cigarette

Table 1. Risk Factors Identified for Endoscopic and Clinical Recurrence of Crohn's Disease After Surgical Resection

High-risk factors	Current smoking History of perforating or penetrating phenotype History of perianal phenotype History of at least 2 prior surgeries Younger age (<30 y)
Moderate-risk factors	Longer segment of diseased bowel at the time of resection (>10 cm) Shorter time to initial surgery (<10 y)

smoking.^{40–47} Other factors that may increase the risk of recurrent disease include an extensive small-bowel resection, age younger than 30 years at diagnosis, a short interval between diagnosis and surgery (<10 y), and the presence of perianal disease^{36,48} (Table 1). Of these, cigarette smoking is the only modifiable risk factor and thus perioperative counseling regarding smoking cessation is paramount because even preoperative smoking cessation may offer benefits.⁴⁹

Therapy Choices

The decision to initiate prophylactic therapy for the prevention of postoperative recurrence remains controversial, and thus risk stratification into low- and high-risk categories can be helpful in identifying which patients are most likely to benefit from immediate or early initiation of postoperative therapy. In the absence of identified risk factors, patients are believed to be at low risk for recurrence, and a reasonable postoperative strategy would be no therapy unless recurrent CD is present at the time of the 6-month ileocolonoscopy.

For patients at moderate or high risk for early recurrence after surgical resection for CD, the use of anti-TNF monotherapy and thiopurine monotherapy have been associated with the greatest decrease in disease recurrence, particularly when compared with antibiotics, aminosalicylates, probiotics, or budesonide alone.³⁹ In a recent network meta-analysis, anti-TNF monotherapy showed the lowest rates of endoscopic recurrence when compared with placebo.⁵⁰ After earlier evaluations of the efficacy of anti-TNF therapy in this setting,^{51–53} the Prospective, Multicenter, Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Trial Comparing REMICADE(R) (Infliximab) and Placebo in the Prevention of Recurrence in Crohn's Disease Patients Undergoing Surgical Resection Who Are at an Increased Risk of Recurrence (PREVENT) study showed significantly lower rates of endoscopic recurrence at week 76 among patients treated with infliximab as compared with placebo (22.4% vs 51.3%; $P < .001$), although there was no statistically significant difference in clinical recurrence (12.9% vs 20.0%; $P = .097$).⁴⁷ In a retrospective, multicenter, observational study from Spain, infliximab and adalimumab performed equally well in the prevention of postoperative recurrence.⁵⁴ Although the efficacy of anti-TNF therapy for the prevention of postoperative recurrence has been well established, the utility of newer biologic therapies such as ustekinumab and vedolizumab has not been determined. When initiating biologic therapy in moderate- or high-risk patients, our practice is to start therapy 2 to 4 weeks after surgery.

In addition to biologic therapy, thiopurines and nitroimidazoles are therapy options for the prevention of postoperative recurrence in select populations. The totality of postoperative prevention data with thiopurines are weak, with nominal benefit in preventing clinical, but

not endoscopic, recurrence. The use of monotherapy thiopurines after surgery has waned and are used most commonly as combination agents with anti-TNFs.⁵⁵ Although most patients do not tolerate long-term metronidazole therapy because of adverse effects such as peripheral neuropathy, there are also data supporting the use of combination therapy with azathioprine and metronidazole,⁵⁶ or metronidazole monotherapy in the postoperative period.^{57,58}

Postoperative Ileocolonoscopy

The risk of postoperative recurrence of CD can be modified significantly using standardized ileocolonoscopic assessment at 6 months postoperatively along with escalation or modification of treatment as necessary. In the randomized postoperative Crohn's endoscopic recurrence (POCER) trial, De Cruz et al⁵⁹ showed an 18% reduction in endoscopic recurrence at 18 months postoperatively among patients who underwent active evaluation with a colonoscopy and treatment escalation (as necessary) at 6 months postoperatively as compared with patients in a standard-care arm. Although clinical risk factors predicted recurrence, low-risk patients also showed the need for continued monitoring and early colonoscopy. In asymptomatic patients in whom endoscopic recurrence was noted, the initiation of therapy was recommended,⁵⁵ given the concern that patients with endoscopic recurrence are at high risk of progression to clinical recurrence and, ultimately, further surgery.

Choosing a Postoperative Strategy

When evaluating the postoperative patient with CD, the decision to initiate early pharmacologic prophylaxis as opposed to endoscopically guided therapy at 6 months should be an individual decision, based on risk stratification (Figure 2). Regardless of risk factors, all patients should undergo ileocolonoscopy with evaluation of the neoterminal ileum and Rutgeerts scoring at 6 to 12 months after surgery. If a patient shows endoscopic recurrence on the first ileocolonoscopy, even if asymptomatic, then an anti-TNF or thiopurine can be introduced.

Patients with risk factors for disease recurrence should be treated aggressively with the initiation of an anti-TNF therapy, likely in combination with an immunomodulator. If there is evidence of endoscopic recurrence on ileocolonoscopy, then the patient's therapy should be optimized or a new regimen should be initiated.

Further Considerations in Postoperative Assessment

Several studies have suggested that fecal calprotectin may serve as a predictor of postoperative recurrence in

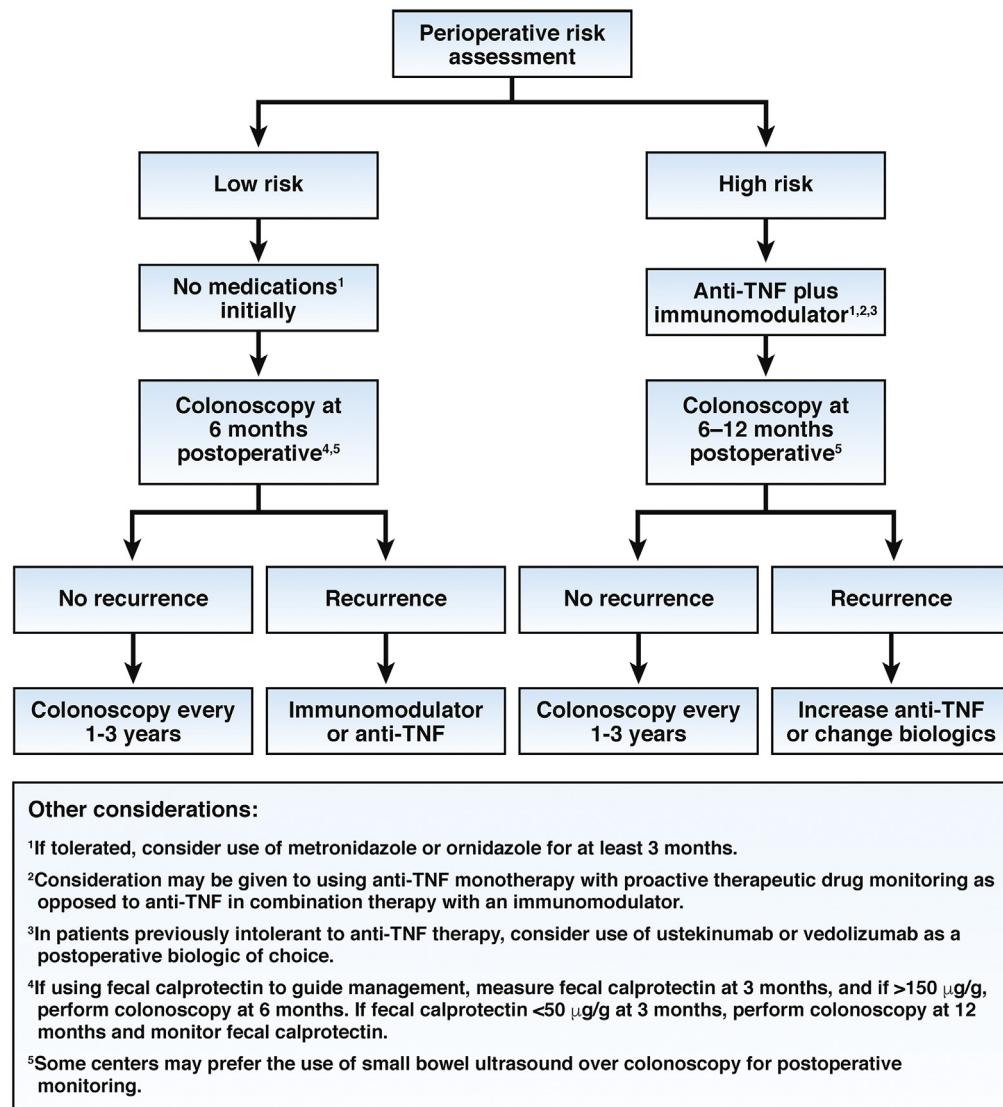


Figure 2. An algorithm for the postoperative management of Crohn's disease. anti-TNF, anti-tumor necrosis factor α .

place of ileocolonoscopy at 6 months.^{60,61} In addition, more recent reports combining fecal calprotectin with serologic markers may offer a glimpse of predictive modeling approaches to improving risk stratification in individual patients.⁶² Whether fecal calprotectin can serve as a reliable surrogate for endoscopic examination as a primary assessment of recurrence after intestinal resection for CD remains unknown.

Although much of the current literature examining the utility of small-bowel ultrasonography in the evaluation of postoperative CD has been limited by sample size, a recent systematic review and meta-analysis indicated that ultrasonography shows high sensitivity and specificity for the detection of postoperative recurrence.⁶³ European Crohn's and Colitis Organization guidelines also have defined ultrasonography as an emerging assessment tool for identifying postoperative recurrence.⁶⁴ Multiple findings on cross-sectional imaging have been identified as predictors of recurrent CD, including wall thickening greater than 3 mm at the anastomosis and anastomotic stenosis on computed tomography enterography.⁶⁵ In addition, magnetic

resonance enterography has shown high agreement with the Rutgeerts score.⁶⁶ Video capsule endoscopy also has shown a high sensitivity and specificity for the detection of postoperative recurrence.⁶⁷

With regard to more standard endoscopic assessment with ileocolonoscopy, the relative clinical significance of i2 disease remains controversial. After the initial publication of the Rutgeerts score, the i2 grade has been divided further into lesions confined to the ileocolonic anastomosis (i2a) and moderate lesions of the remainder of the neoterminal ileum (i2b).⁶⁸ This delineation between i2a and i2b disease initially was proposed because of the suspicion that ulcers contained to the anastomosis were more likely to be postsurgical or ischemic and not predictive of future CD-related complications. However, in recent evaluations, there has been no significant difference in the rate of postoperative recurrence⁶⁹ or the need for further endoscopic or surgical intervention⁶⁹ when comparing patients with i2a and i2b disease, suggesting that patients with i2a disease may require closer monitoring than initially suspected.

Management After Ileal Pouch-Anal Anastomosis

The Immediate Perioperative Period

Restorative proctocolectomy with IPAA is now the standard surgical approach for medically refractory UC or UC-related dysplasia. In patients with indeterminate colitis⁷⁰ and a minority of CD patients with disease limited to the colon, IPAA also may be used, depending on local practices.⁷¹ Although IPAA offers significant improvements in quality of life,⁷¹ postoperative morbidity can occur including short-term complications of pelvic sepsis from anastomotic leaks as well as long-term complications including new inflammatory pouch-related conditions.

In highly selected patients, the colectomy and the pouch creation can be performed in a single surgery without an ileostomy, or as a 2-stage IPAA in which the IPAA is created in the first surgery and the ileostomy is reversed in the second surgery. However, in the current era of combination immunosuppression and increased use of biologic therapy and small-molecule inhibitors, the more common approach to IPAA surgery is a 3-stage approach owing to improved outcomes, particularly in patients with medically refractory UC. For example, preoperative anti-TNF exposure and vedolizumab are associated with a significant increase in postoperative complications among patients who undergo IPAA within 12 weeks of biologic exposure. In contrast, if a colectomy was performed during the first surgery, biologic therapy did not increase the rate of complications in patients undergoing subtotal colectomy or total abdominal colectomy.¹³

In analyses using National Surgical Quality Improvement Program data, patients undergoing delayed pouch creation were at a decreased risk for unplanned reoperations as well as adverse events,⁷² and 2-stage IPAA was associated with an increased risk for readmission for venous thromboembolism.³⁵ Most importantly, when a 3-stage approach is used, there is a decreased risk of pelvic sepsis because the IPAA is performed once the patient is off immunosuppression and their nutrition is improved. This is critical because pelvic sepsis is the leading cause of pouch failure and may result in poor pouch outcome. Therefore, a 3-stage approach should be used liberally in the setting of medically refractory disease, especially in the setting of recent exposure to corticosteroids and/or biologic therapy.

Long-Term Complications After Ileal Pouch-Anal Anastomosis

Acute pouchitis. When patients present with new symptoms after IPAA, a systematic approach to the initial evaluation is critical. There are multiple potential underlying diagnoses that may be present in patients with

suspected inflammation of the pouch after IPAA (Figure 3). Approximately 40% of patients will develop an episode of acute pouchitis within the first year after IPAA,⁷³ and up to 80% of patients will develop acute pouchitis symptoms at 30 years after IPAA.^{74,75} Classically, the symptoms of acute pouchitis have been characterized by increased frequency or urgency, potentially accompanied by abdominal cramping or incontinence.⁷⁶

In the first presentation of suspected pouchitis, strong consideration should be given to performing a pouchoscopy because the severity of symptoms may not correlate with endoscopic or histologic activity in all patients.⁷⁷ In addition, pouchoscopy offers the ability to evaluate other potential etiologies of new-onset symptoms after IPAA, including cuffitis, ischemia, postsurgical phenomena such as strictures or sinus tracts, or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug-induced inflammation. Consideration also should be given to other systemic disorders such as primary sclerosing cholangitis, which increase the risk for development of pouchitis and prepouch ileitis.⁷⁸

Once a diagnosis of acute pouchitis has been made, prompt initiation of antibiotic therapy resolves symptoms in the majority of patients. Multiple antibiotic regimens have shown efficacy in treating acute pouchitis,⁷⁹ however, the optimal treatment regimen is unknown. In treating the first episode of pouchitis, we typically use a 14-day course of ciprofloxacin or metronidazole. In particular, ciprofloxacin may be associated with a greater response in acute pouchitis, with less associated adverse effects.⁸⁰

Although primary prophylaxis to prevent pouchitis after IPAA also has been considered, the evidence to support the use of probiotics, antibiotics, and other agents such as sulfasalazine as a method of primary prophylaxis is limited.^{73,79} A recent Cochrane review highlighted the need for well-designed studies to identify optimal treatment strategies for both the treatment of acute pouchitis as well as the prevention of pouchitis in this population.⁷⁹

Chronic pouchitis. Although the majority of patients presenting with acute pouchitis will respond to a short course of antibiotics, up to 19% of patients will develop chronic antibiotic-dependent pouchitis (CADP),⁷⁶ which traditionally has been defined by at least 4 episodes of recurrent pouchitis per year that respond to antibiotic therapy. Initial randomized controlled trials of the efficacy of probiotic therapy as a secondary treatment for CADP showed that VSL#3 was effective for maintaining remission after an initial course of antibiotics.^{81,82} In follow-up studies of real-world efficacy, however, the durability of VSL#3 seemed limited owing to recurrent symptoms or adverse effects.⁸³ Fecal microbiota transplant also has been attempted as a means of avoiding long-term antibiotic exposure, however this approach was not successful in an early study, perhaps owing to low levels of engraftment.⁸⁴ Given the lack of consistent data with regard to VSL#3 or other probiotics as a

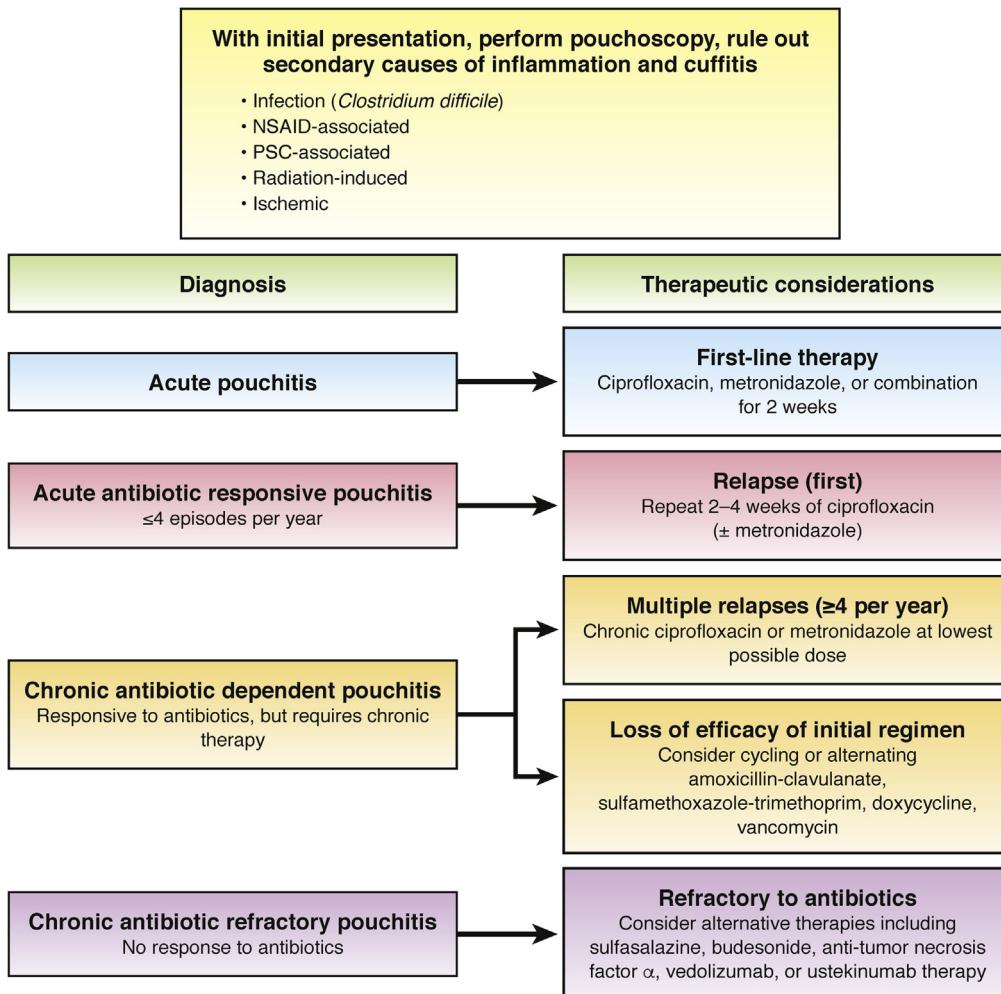


Figure 3. Diagnostic and therapeutic considerations in patients presenting with inflammation of the pouch after ileal pouch-anal anastomosis. NSAID, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug; PSC, primary sclerosing cholangitis.

method of secondary prophylaxis in patients with CADP, we typically attempt to identify the minimal effective dose of antibiotic therapy. Identification of this dose can be accomplished using an individualized tapering schedule, in which patients record changes in symptoms including stool frequency, urgency, and nocturnal symptoms.

An even smaller group of patients will go on to develop chronic antibiotic-refractory pouchitis. This population is among the most difficult to treat, often requiring escalation to immunosuppressive therapies. In a systematic review and meta-analysis, the long-term rate of remission with anti-TNF therapy for chronic refractory pouchitis was 37%.⁸⁵ More recently, novel biologic therapies such as vedolizumab⁸⁶ and ustekinumab⁸⁷ have shown efficacy in this population. Although uncommon, approximately 10% of patients may develop *Clostridium difficile* infection after IPAA,⁸⁸ thus assessing for *C difficile* infection in patients with chronic refractory symptoms may be warranted.

Crohn's-like disease of the pouch. Despite a preoperative diagnosis of UC or indeterminate colitis, approximately 10% of patients will develop Crohn's-like disease (CLD) of the pouch after IPAA.⁸⁹ Unfortunately, several gaps in our understanding of this disease process exist,

beginning with the terminology used to describe these changes after IPAA. Multiple terms have been used to describe this condition,⁹⁰ including CD of the pouch, CD in IPAA, CD-like condition in ileal pouches, Crohn's pouchitis, and CLD of the pouch. Significant heterogeneity also exists in the diagnostic criteria used in identifying patients with CLD of the pouch. In a recent systematic review and meta-analysis, the 3 most common diagnostic criteria were the presence of a fistula/fistulae, a stricture involving the pouch or prepouch ileum, or the presence of prepouch ileitis.⁸⁹ Patients may present with these findings de novo, or after an initial period of treatment for suspected acute or chronic pouchitis.

Although complex, management decisions in this population are critically important given that CLD of the pouch represents one of the most common etiologies of pouch failure.⁹¹ Similar to the reported evidence in patients with chronic antibiotic-refractory pouchitis, the experience with anti-TNF therapy for CLD of the pouch is heterogeneous, with 12-month remission rates estimated at 57%.⁸⁵ Vedolizumab also has shown benefits in the treatment of CLD of the pouch,⁸⁶ with prior anti-TNF exposure being a risk factor for decreased response.⁸⁶ In an evaluation of patients with CLD of the pouch and

chronic pouchitis, 83% of patients showed clinical response to ustekinumab at 6 months.⁸⁷

Few predictors of these inflammatory conditions of the pouch exist. In addition, the factors involved in the development of acute and chronic pouch inflammation may be differential.⁹² Extensive colonic disease,⁹² high levels of perinuclear antineutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies before colectomy,⁹³ and extraintestinal manifestations have been associated with an increased risk for chronic pouchitis.⁹² Current decision making often rests in the treatment of symptoms after these conditions develop rather than in prediction and prevention or early intervention. Although preoperative counseling regarding the potential development of these conditions remains important, future research should be focused on standardizing our approach to patients with inflammatory conditions after IPAA, developing predictors, and evaluating comparative effectiveness of therapies in this population.

Functional and Defecatory Disorders of the Pouch

Patients also may present with functional and other defecatory disorders after IPAA. In a study of 111 patients with an IPAA, almost 75% of patients undergoing anorectal manometry met criteria for non-relaxing pelvic floor dysfunction (N-RPFD).⁹⁴ In addition, a significantly higher proportion of patients with chronic pouchitis were diagnosed with N-RPFD as compared with those patients without chronic pouchitis.⁹⁴ Although the exact etiology of this relationship is not clear, fecal stasis in the setting of abnormal defecation may play a significant role in bacterial changes and subsequent pouch inflammation. There are no standard criteria for the diagnosis of N-RPFD. However, if patients complain of abnormal defecation or other symptoms suggestive of a pouch evacuation disorder, prompt consideration of anorectal manometry and other evaluation for N-RPFD should be entertained because early results indicate that biofeedback therapy is effective in patients with an IPAA after a diagnosis of N-RPFD.⁹⁴

Surveillance for Pouch Dysplasia and Neoplasia

Although proctocolectomy dramatically reduces the risk for a colorectal malignancy in UC patients, the risk for development of pouch neoplasia remains. Society guidelines on surveillance intervals are not uniform,⁹⁵ and significant heterogeneity in surveillance patterns exists in clinical practice.⁹⁶ This is likely because the overall incidence of pouch dysplasia (3.0%) and cancer (2.7%) are relatively low after 20 years,⁹⁷ with primary cancers of the pouch body (as compared with the rectal cuff) exceedingly rare.⁹⁸ In addition, rates are influenced by high-risk factors, including a preoperative diagnosis of dysplasia or cancer, a concomitant diagnosis of primary

sclerosing cholangitis, or mucosal features such as type C pouch mucosa.⁹⁵ Because yearly surveillance for patients without high-risk factors for dysplasia does not seem efficient or guided by risk stratification, we would propose annual pouchoscopy only in patients with high-risk features and every 5 years in those without.

Conclusions

The perioperative and postoperative management of patients with IBD continues to increase in complexity with the addition of novel therapies, more widespread utilization of biologic therapies, and the recognition that earlier assessment and proactive intervention improves outcomes in the postoperative period. Although careful consideration should be given to an individual's risk factors in the perioperative evaluation, the use of biologic therapies in the preoperative period appears to be safe and should not overly influence surgical decision making. Among patients with CD, a standardized approach to postoperative therapy, based on risk stratification and ileocolonoscopy at 6 to 12 months after surgery, significantly has improved outcomes. In patients with UC, a similar standardized approach to diagnosing and managing postoperative disorders would aid significantly in improving our understanding of the natural history of pouch-related disorders and outcomes.

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Conflicts of interest

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