Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is a term used to describe disorders that involve chronic inflammation of your digestive tract. The two most common types are Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis.

**Crohn’s Disease**
- Patches of inflammation with some healthy areas in the GI tract
- Inflammation in any part of the digestive tract — most commonly affects the end of the small bowel (ileum) and the beginning of the colon
- Abdominal pain, diarrhea, weight loss, joint pain and swelling, fatigue, mouth sores and anemia/iron deficiency

**Ulcerative Colitis**
- Areas of continuous inflammation in the colon
- Inflammation of the large intestine (colon and rectum)
- Diarrhea, weight loss, fatigue, rectal bleeding and urgency to poop

**When to see your healthcare provider**
Many women find it difficult to discuss symptoms during their visit with their healthcare provider (HCP), or they dismiss symptoms as less serious conditions. Every person’s IBD is different, but a conversation with your HCP can help manage symptoms and discomfort.

**Look out for these symptoms and make an appointment with your HCP:**
- Abdominal pain that you would describe as intense, crampy and occurring on and off for weeks or longer
- Change in how often you have to poop
- Chronic diarrhea

**Don’t go through IBD alone**
There are support groups available so you don’t have to go through this alone. Support from a community, even online, can help you cope with Crohn’s disease or ulcerative colitis.

healthwomen