

The term " inflammatory bowel disease " applies to the idiopathic chronic inflammatory bowel disease :Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. These are distinguished from inflammatory bowel diseases of established origin such as viral , bacterial , and parasitic infections ; diverticulitis ; radiation enteritis or colitis ; drug or toxin-induced enterocolitis ; or vasculitis of the intestinal tract. Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are disorders of unknown etiology involving genetic and immunologic influences on the gastrointestinal tract's ability to distinguish foreign from self antigens and/or to down-regulate the mucosal immune response. They share many overlapping epidemiologic , clinical and therapeutic features. Both are chronic , medically incurable conditions. Whereas a proctocolectomy cures ulcerative colitis , surgery for Crohn's disease is limited to treatment of complications (Hanauer ,1992).

The aim of the present work is to review all aspects about Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis hoping to conclude the best way to diagnose and to treat such conditions.