

ALEXITHYMIA IN IBD: A NEW MANAGEMENT TOOL FOR MULTIDISCIPLINARY TARGETED CARE

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Poster

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Alexithymia, difficulty identifying and describing emotions, affects approximately one-quarter of IBD patients and correlates with disease activity and psychological distress in both Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

KEY POINTS

- In a study of 103 IBD patients (45 with Crohn's disease, 58 with ulcerative colitis), the overall prevalence of alexithymia was 24.3 percent, with comparable rates between Crohn's disease (22.2 percent) and ulcerative colitis (25.9 percent).
- In Crohn's disease, alexithymia scores correlated significantly with endoscopic disease activity (CDEIS r equals 0.35, p equals 0.023) and the presence of fistulas or abscesses (r equals 0.38, p equals 0.042).
- In ulcerative colitis, clinical disease activity independently predicted alexithymia (SCCAI beta equals 7.29, p equals 0.023).
- Alexithymia correlated significantly with depression and anxiety scores in both disease types, with depression showing the strongest association in Crohn's disease (r equals 0.58, p less than 0.001).
- The authors suggest that assessing emotional processing may support targeted multidisciplinary care in patients with active or complicated IBD.

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