

MICROBIAL SIGNATURE OF PATIENTS WITH NEWLY DIAGNOSED CROHN'S DISEASE IDENTIFIES PATIENTS WITH COMPLICATED DISEASE COURSE

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A prospective study of 251 newly diagnosed Crohn's disease patients identified a distinct baseline microbial cluster associated with complicated disease course.

KEY POINTS

- Two distinct baseline microbial clusters were identified through unsupervised analysis in newly diagnosed Crohn's disease patients followed for a median of 25 months.
- A pathogenic cluster characterized by enrichment of *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella*, and *Gemmella* and depletion of *Faecalibacterium*, *Lachnospiraceae*, and *Roseburia* identified patients with complicated disease course (52.6% versus 20.8%, $p < 0.001$).
- The pathogenic cluster exhibited lower Shannon diversity, higher microbial dysbiosis index (both $p < 0.001$), and higher abundances of fungal taxa including *Cladosporium* and *Aspergillus*.
- Complicated disease course, defined as steroid dependency, CD-related hospitalization, surgery, or more than one biologic per year, occurred in 27.1% of patients at a median of 3.9 months.
- Among 109 patients with uncomplicated phenotype at baseline, only 11 developed complicated disease and no specific bacterial signature was detected in this subgroup.

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