Prevention of Diverticulitis
Mesalazine, Probiotics or Vitamin D?

By Dr Cliona Maguire - Gastroenterologist

Diverticular disease is common in Australia and the incidence increases with age. It affects 50% of individuals at the age of 50 years and 70% by 70 years of age. Epidemiological studies have shown an association between low fibre intake and an increased incidence of diverticulosis.

The risk of developing and attack of diverticulitis has been estimated to be about 10-25%. Many patients who have had an attack of diverticulitis will ask what can be done to prevent further attacks.

A high fibre diet is often recommended after an episode of diverticulitis to prevent further attacks, although the evidence to support this is lacking. Patients are also commonly advised to avoid corn seeds and nuts after an attack of diverticulitis although a study of 47,000 health professionals followed over 18 years found no association between consumption of corn, seeds and nuts and the risk of attacks of diverticulitis.

There have been several studies investigating the use of the non-absorbable antibiotic Rifaxamin in patients with diverticular disease and a metaanalysis of 4 of these trials did show a benefit for Rifaxamin and fibre in reducing symptoms as compared with fibre alone. However, Rifaxamin is available on the PBS only for treatment of hepatic encephalopathy and there is a significant cost associated with it’s use.

Mesalazine has been shown to reduce the risk of recurrent diverticulitis. The DIVA trial was a placebo controlled double blind study comparing mesalazine granules 1.6g with and without probiotics in patients with CT scan documented diverticulitis. Mesalazine was found to be effective compared to the placebo. These results were not reproduced in a larger study using MMX mesalazine (Mezavant). As mesalazine is currently not available on the PBS for this indication which may make prescribing difficult for some patients.

Probiotics have also been studied with one study showing a benefit for Lactobacillus and mesalazine compared with mesalazine alone but more and better data is required.

There has also been a recent trial which showed that low Vitamin D levels are associated with an increased risk of diverticulitis and complications. Vitamin D is known to be important in maintaining mucosal integrity and modulating inflammation in the gut. Therefore checking Vitamin D levels in patients who have had an attack of diverticulitis and supplementing with Vitamin D may help prevent further attacks.

In summary, in patients who have had recurrent attacks of diverticulitis, I feel it is worthwhile to advise a probiotic and a vitamin D supplement if levels are low and consider use of a 5 ASA agent such as salazopyrine or mesalazine if possible.

Dr Maguire provides services at Montserrat Gaythorne Clinic 4 days per week, and may be contacted on (07) 3833 6701

References:
That is why in April, Montserrat reception and Call Centre staff spent a day learning from the experts in Customer service, Marriott Hotel staff.

Our team benefited hugely from getting a first hand look at how a first class hotel handles many of the same day to day challenges we face at Montserrat. During the training there were a lot of positive suggestions from staff and outcomes that will build on our already excellent service to our patients. We also heard some great stories about recent celebrity guests, such as President Obama & family.

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- 5/10 rule: Smile at 10 feet
  Greeting at 5 feet
- Every patient is to feel like a VIP
- Being 10 steps ahead of clients - anticipate their needs & questions.

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at North Lakes Day Hospitals

Staff training
at the Marriott Hotel, Brisbane

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Montserrat Specialist Referrals
made easy with Medical Director.

Montserrat Day Hospitals have now made it easier to find a Montserrat Specialist in your patient’s area with a specialised referral option in Medical Director. You can now find our Specialists including Gastroenterologists, Haematologists, Oncologists and many others in Medical Director’s new referral widget bar. See below for step-by-step of how to easily refer your patients to a Montserrat Day Hospital or specialist in your desired area.

1. From the main screen of Medical Director, on the right-hand side of the screen there is a widget bar, where you will need to select “Refer.”

2. Then select “Get Started” and the next screen will show search boxes for Speciality and Suburb. Once you have selected what you are looking for in both boxes, click “Search” and the results will appear.

3. Montserrat Day Hospital is the option at the top

4. *Make sure you have upgraded to the current version of Medical Director for this function.

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Montserrat Day Hospitals are pleased to offer a bulk-billed consultation with our selected Gastroenterologists upon presentation of their Coeliac Queensland Members card.

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Consults will be offered from our Brisbane City, Indooroopilly & North Lakes locations.

Visit montserrat.com.au for more information or contact our bookings team on (07) 3833 6701.
Open Access Endoscopy Timetable

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<th>Dr Cliona Maguire</th>
<th>Dr Derwin Williams</th>
<th>Dr Mark Norrie</th>
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Service Rotates between Doctors at Indooroopilly

* Unless in Emerald or Longreach
# Full day list usually available
* Fortnightly only
* Monthly only (Haemorrhoid Clinic)

Gynaecology
- Dr Archana Saraswat: 1300 780 138
- Dr Lata Shama: 07 3833 6765
- Dr Graham Tronc: 07 3870 5602
- Dr Andy Stamatiou: 07 3613 9774

Occupational Medicine
- Dr Robert McCarrn: drrrob@omcd.com.au
- Dr Robert McCarrnt: 07 3833 7601

Open Access Endoscopy
- Dr Andrew Smith: 07 3385 0900
- Dr Stuart Reader: 07 3385 0900
- Dr Kate Slaughter: 07 3385 0900

Oral & Maxillofacial
- Dr Richard Harris: 07 3852 4888
- Dr Mohammed Mansour: 07 3832 3232
- Dr Terrence Alexander: 07 3832 3232

Orthopaedics
- Dr Gaugam Gamboa (Knees): 07 3832 1652
- Dr Phil Richardson: 1300 789 240
- Dr Robert Boyle: 1300 889 998
- Dr Mark Kohout: 1300 551 151

Physiotherapy
- Bodyworks Physiotherapy: 07 3204 6388
- Queensland Vascular Clinic: 07 3833 6766
- Rheumatology
  - Dr Mukhlesur Rahman: 07 3833 6765
- Sleep Clinic
  - Northside Sleep Clinic: 07 3635 8400
- Urology
  - Dr Joe Schoeman: 07 3831 9049
- Vascular Surgery
  - Dr Simon Quinn: 07 3188 7521

North Lakes Haematology & Oncology Contacts

Sunshine Coast Haematology & Oncology Contacts