Eosinophilic Colitis (EC) Quick Facts

Eosinophilic colitis is a rare disease in which a type of white blood cell, the eosinophil, causes injury and inflammation to the large intestine (the colon). Eosinophilic colitis may affect both adults and children. Some infants may have milk-soy protein intolerance which may look like eosinophilic colitis but is typically outgrown and is termed allergic colitis.

**Symptoms:**
- Vomiting, nausea, diarrhea
- Difficulties feeding and/or poor weight gain
- Poor growth and weight loss
- Abdominal pain
- Bloody diarrhea/blood in stool
- Anemia (low blood counts)
- Malnutrition
- Fatigue

**Associated Diseases:**
- Environmental and/or food allergies in some
- May occur in conjunction with other eosinophilic gastrointestinal disorders, such as eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE), eosinophilic gastritis (EG), eosinophilic gastroenteritis (EGE).

**Causes:**
- Unknown
- Food allergies may play a role in some patients

**Diagnosis:**
- Lower endoscopy or colonoscopy (placement of a lighted, flexible tube into the anus, rectum and large intestine). This procedure is done following the administration of medications (anesthesia) to keep patients comfortable.
- Biopsies of the large intestine are necessary to make the diagnosis. Increased levels of eosinophils causing injury on biopsy, in the context of symptoms consistent with EC

**Findings:**
- Colonoscopy may show erosions, ulcers, or irritated areas of the large intestine
- Biopsy: Eosinophils invading the large intestine. Biopsy may show chronic inflammation. No consensus recommendations on definition or diagnosis.

**Allergy Testing**
- Allergy testing may be helpful in some patients to identify and remove offending food allergens.

**Management:**
- Avoid known food allergens or triggers
- Systemic Steroids (prednisone)
- Elemental diet (avoid all food protein and obtain all nutrition from a special formula)
- Iron supplementation if iron deficient
- Nutritional support as needed
- Anti-inflammatory medications for the large intestine
- Topical steroids (suppository or enema; specific pill preparations that release steroids in the colon)
- Enteric coated budesonide

**Prognosis:**
- Depends on response to treatment, disease severity, and individual patient characteristics
- Recurrent episodes may occur

**About APFED:** The American Partnership for Eosinophilic Disorders (APFED) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization for those living with eosinophilic disorders. APFED educates and raises awareness of these conditions, advocates for the unmet needs of patients, and supports research advances. APFED also hosts online community, community events, and an annual patient education conference. For more information, visit apfed.org.