

CROHN'S DISEASE (REGIONAL ENTERITIS)

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Chronic inflammatory disease of the ileum, possibly first recognised by Morgagni in 1761 and described separately by Leśniowski and Dalziel in the early twentieth century, is known as Crohn's disease after a key publication by Crohn, Ginzburg and Oppenheimer in 1932. It is characterised by a chronic - full-thickness inflammatory process that can affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract from the lips to the anal margin. It is most common in North America and northern Europe, with an annual incidence of 8 per 100 000. CD is slightly more common in women and is most frequently diagnosed between the ages of 25 and 40 years. There is a second peak of incidence around the age of 70 years. The prevalence is - highest among white people, notably in North America and - north-western Europe. CD is less common in central Europe incidence is rising in Asia, which is attributed to increased urbanisation. There are differences in clinical manifestations in Asian populations, with a higher male predominance, more perianal involvement, fewer extraintestinal manifestations and worse clinical outcomes. The prevalence of CD seems to be three to five times higher in the Ashkenazi Jewish population, although it is lower in the Jewish population in Israel, suggesting the importance of environmental factors.

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