

SATURDAY, November 5, 2022

Canada Future Directions in IBD



SESSION I

THE BRAIN-GUT AXIS IN MENTAL HEALTH

Resiliency and Mental Health: A key to success?

Lesley Graff, PhD CPsych

Resilience, which relates to adapting well to adversity and significant stress, has had increasing attention in the management of chronic disease. Research in resilience and mental health has shifted the lens somewhat further ‘upstream’ from treating psychopathology to prevention and early intervention. Resilience has been examined as a potential protective mechanism to mitigate psychological processes, including stress-related disorders, which affect disease progression. Systematic reviews have identified positive effects of resilience in the trajectory of diverse diseases including cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes. In inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), there is growing support for resilience as a relevant factor in disease management, including recent findings of its association with lower levels of disease activity and fewer surgeries.¹ Resilience is seen to be modifiable and not solely an innate characteristic. More broadly, meta-analytic outcomes have shown improvement through resilience enhancement approaches. These approaches are commonly based on psychological therapies that emphasize strengthening psychological flexibility and self-efficacy, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and mindfulness. An IBD-specific intervention, with resilience as the therapeutic target, not only demonstrated improved resilience, but also showed significant reductions in healthcare utilization for IBD participants, including hospitalizations.² These findings have further underscored the value of an integrated care model for IBD patients to address medical and psychological needs.³ Overall, to further the understanding of the role of resilience in IBD and other chronic diseases, prospective longitudinal studies would optimally guide directionality, effectiveness, and durability in strengthening resilience.

References

1. Sehgal P, Ungaro RC, Foltz C, et al. High levels of psychological resilience associated with less disease activity, better quality of life, and fewer surgeries in inflammatory bowel disease. *Inflamm Bowel Dis*. 2021;27(6):791–6.
2. Keefer L, Gorbenko K, Siganiporta T, et al. Resilience-based integrated IBD care is associated with reductions in health care use and opioids. *Clin Gastroenterol Hepatol*. 2022;20(8):1831–8.
3. Keefer L, Palsson OS, Pandolfino JE. Best Practice Update: Incorporating Psychogastroenterology Into Management of Digestive Disorders. *Gastroenterology*. 2018;154:1249–57.