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Declining Prevalence of New Cases of Ulcerative Colitis

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Purpose: To evaluate the prevalence trend for ulcerative colitis (UC) over the past 6.5 years in a community practice.

Methods: A retrospective study of all patients with a diagnosis of UC seen between 1/2000–6/2006 at our 2 man private clinical GI practice in Orlando, FL was undertaken. Patients were divided into those who received a new diagnosis of UC and those who already had the diagnosis but had changed doctors or geographic location. The prevalence of new cases was assessed by year. Only patients with at least proctosigmoiditis were included.

Results: 107 new patients with UC were seen in our practice during this time frame. 55 were new diagnoses, 51% female, 49% male. There was an increase in cases from 2000 to 2002, with 9, 12, and 12 patients diagnosed respectively. However, there was a decreasing prevalence from 2003 to 2006, with 8, 7, 5 and 2 (for half of 2006) patients diagnosed for those respective years.

Conclusions: 1. Although these are relatively small numbers of patients, there appears to be a declining prevalence trend for UC over the past 6.5 years in our community in central Florida.

2. Almost 50% of new patients seen with UC in our practice had already been diagnosed elsewhere and were either changing doctors or geographic location. These patterns may make data collection very difficult to assess, if the same patients are included in other geographical data bases from where they moved.