These topics are conversation starters and suggestions on how to develop a list of questions that are important to you regarding your ulcerative colitis (UC) for when you go to see your doctor.

**Embarrassing Symptoms**

If you are feeling embarrassed about having to go to the bathroom all the time, tell your doctor just that—you’re embarrassed. It will let your doctor know that your symptoms are not under control. It will also motivate your doctor to be sensitive to your feelings about your symptoms, without ignoring or minimizing them.

The same goes for rectal bleeding. Of course this may be a symptom you’re used to dealing with because of your UC. But it’s an important part of your condition that your doctor needs to know about. In fact, your doctor may have just what you need to help reduce or stop the bleeding.

Don’t be afraid to talk about diarrhea. Even though society doles out bathroom humor in large doses, diarrhea is no laughing matter. It may be a serious and often debilitating symptom of UC, and your doctor should help you not to feel embarrassed about it. Even if you’ve gotten really good at handling your flare-ups and accepting your condition, your doctor will only know it is having an impact on your life if you tell him or her about it.

The same goes for symptoms like cramping or gas. If these symptoms are having an impact on you, your doctor may be able to help you find a solution. Tell your doctor about it; it’s the only way he or she can help.

**Diet and Exercise**

Living with UC, you probably know a lot about how your body reacts to what you do or eat. Keeping a daily log of meals and exercise might help reassure you and your doctor, as will asking your doctor questions like:

- Will certain foods or drinks make my symptoms worse?
- Are there certain foods or drinks that I should try to include in my diet?
- Are there activities or exercises that will relieve or reduce my symptoms?

**Stress**

Although stress may not cause UC, anxiety over having the condition may worsen symptoms. In one survey, 82% of patients with UC said their condition made life more stressful. See how your doctor can help. Ask:

- How does stress affect my UC?
- What can I do to reduce my stress about having flare-ups?
- How can I feel less stressed about my condition and more in control?
Long-Term Concerns

It’s normal to wonder what your UC could mean for your overall health and well-being in the long-term. Reassure yourself by asking your doctor:

- Should I be worried about taking too much medication and/or for too long?
- When should I schedule my next appointment?
- How often should I see a doctor?
- What types of screenings or tests should I have to ensure I stay healthy?