

Foreword

I have inflammatory bowel disease, also known as IBD. Mostly it appears to be ulcerative colitis, but some indicators suggest that I might have Crohn's disease. This book is the story of my life with colitis, from the initial discovery to the many resulting adventures that have followed. It offers perspectives on living with IBD and the laughs and tears it can bring.

There's no shortage of books that cover the clinical elements—the diagnosis, the details of the disease, the treatments and medications. But there are few publications that focus on the life this illness brings, the coping tools, the joy and sorrow. And there are even fewer that are funny. Call it the softer side, if you like, but after reading all the encyclopedic medical material, I was ready for the second act, the part about how to make life work in the midst of a chronic disease. From that gap grew my inspiration for this book. I can't promise you a foolproof solution, but I can give you a picture of what my life is like, and maybe that's a start.

If I had my way, IBD patients would read, enjoy, laugh, and learn from my experiences—and also share my insights with their family and friends as a way to help them understand what we go through. If I can articulate some of my quirky observations in a meaningful way that you can all enjoy, then I have accomplished my purpose.

In these pages you'll find funny stories, interesting tidbits, advice, insight, and much more. I have interspersed escapades with parables, and mixed in plenty of practical tips as well. I have also included information about common procedures, medications, and symptoms—but it will be unlike the stuff you've read elsewhere. Here I'll give you the straight talk, the inside scoop, and you will laugh, I promise. It's time to set your embarrassment aside and get out your funny bone.

The chapters are organized into two sections. Part I introduces the chronological development of my disease and associated adventures—which represents the “Colitis” side of *Colitiscope*. Part II explores the perspectives, life challenges, and solutions—making up the “Scope” and “Cope” portions of *Colitiscope*. From this collection, it is my hope that you will learn, share, and laugh.

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My wife, Heather, is the most patient person I’ve ever known, and I can never thank her enough for that and everything else. My parents have supported and encouraged me, instilling in me the tools I need to live a whole life. My brother, friends, colleagues, and others all make sacrifices which accommodate my illness (and strangeness, freakishness, and whatever else I may be). My doctors and advisors, my contacts at the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA), and so many others have helped me to get where I am. I thank you all.