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**New entity of adult ultra-short coeliac disease**

Raju S, Greenaway E, Schiepatti A, et al. [New entity of adult ultra-short coeliac disease: the first international cohort and case–control study](https://gut.bmj.com/content/73/7/1124). Gut 2024; 73: 1124-1130. doi: 10.1136/gutjnl-2023-330913.

Ultra-short coeliac disease (USCD) occurs when villous atrophy (VA) is present only in the duodenal bulb (D1) with concurrent positive coeliac serology. This international multicentre observational cohort study reviewed all patients with USCD between 2009 and 2022 in ten tertiary coeliac disease centres including Sheffield, UK.

In this study, the Group 1 cohort were patients (≥16 years old) identified as having USCD, defined by a combination of positive serological markers and histologically confirmed VA confined to D1 while taking a gluten containing diet (GFD). Diagnoses were made locally by gastroenterologists with expertise in coeliac disease. Group 2 cohort patients were age-matched and sex-matched controls identified from databases of adult patients with coeliac disease diagnosed in each centre.

Results from the study showed that USCD patients presented at a younger age ((27 years (IQR 21–43 years) vs. 38 years (IQR 26–53 years), p<0.001). Both cohorts had the same number of symptoms overall (median 3 (IQR 2–4) vs 3 (IQR 1–4), p=0.875). USCD patients also showed lower IgA-tTG (Immunoglobulin A-tissue transglutaminase) titres compared to patients with conventional coeliac disease.

The effects of a GFD on serological markers and symptoms of both cohorts were monitored. Both cohorts experienced a similar reduction in IgA-tTG titres. Levels of vitamin B12, iron, folate and vitamin D all improved after undertaking a GFD. Despite only having VA in the duodenal bulb, symptomatic improvement occurred in patients with USCD similar to the age-matched and sex-matched controls (95.7% vs. 89.1%, p=0.115). This study endorses the recommendation of taking samples from D1 as a mandatory component of coeliac disease diagnostic work up.