



Cover caption: Ulcerative colitis. Coloured scanning electron micrograph (SEM) of freeze-fractured bowel tissue from a patient suffering from ulcerative colitis. The fracture plane has passed through the walls of a tubular gland, leaving the space (lumen) between the walls (lower left to top right) surrounded by a section through these walls. This section shows that the wall comprises columnar absorptive cells that absorb nutrients through the microvilli on their surface. This surface is partly visible in the lumen. The absence of mucus-secreting goblet cells is a characteristic of ulcerative colitis, which is the inflammation and ulceration of the colon and rectum. Magnification unknown. Cover credit: STEVE GSCHMEISSNER / SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY.

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