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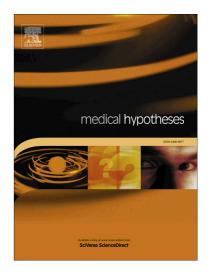
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# **ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT**

## **Mucus Protectors: Promising Therapeutic Strategies for**

## **Inflammatory Bowel Disease**

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#### **Abstract**

Inflammatory bowel disease(IBD) is a group of intestinal non-specific inflammatory diseases with unclear pathogenesis, characterized with the impaired intestinal mucosal barriers and the activated immune system. Mucus layer is the vital protector over the intestinal epithelia cells(IECs). Mucus layer with impaired function could not provide isolated protection for IECs and thus proteases and pathogens from the gut lumen attacked and damaged the epithelial layer. Clinical manifestation and histopathology suggest that IBD might be a self-digestive inflammatory disease caused by digestive enzymes. In this review, we specifically focus on the role of intestinal mucosal barriers and aim to summarize the relationship among mucus layer, self-digestion and inflammation in IBD. We also propose a "Two Hits" Self-Digestion theory to explain the role of self-digestion and assess the application of mucus protectors to treat IBD.

## **Keywords**

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD); intestinal epithelial cells(IECs); mucus layer; self-digestion; inflammation

#### Introduction

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is a term for a group of intestinal non-specific inflammatory diseases, including ulcerative colitis (UC), Crohn's disease (CD), and indeterminate colitis (IC). Peptic ulcer disease (PUD) is the general term for ulcerative diseases above the ligament of Treitz that occur as a result of erosion by digestive juice containing gastric acid and pepsin. PUD and IBD show similarities in terms of their recurrent clinical manifestation, endoscopic features and histopathology, suggesting that there might be common pathogenesis between them involving self-digestion.

#### **Intestinal Mucosa Barrier**

Intestine separates the internal environment from the outside world. Barriers are needed for the homeostasis of host–microbial interactions and immune due to abundant commensal microorganisms and immune cells in the mammalian gastrointestinal tract.

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