



## STUDY INSIDER

### HELPING FUTURE PATIENTS LIKE YOU



Half of all Americans have small pouches called diverticula lining their colon. These pouches form when increased pressure pushes the wall of the colon outward at certain weak points.

If these pouches become inflamed or infected, the condition is called diverticulitis.

Diverticulitis is the leading cause for non-emergency surgery to remove all or part of the colon. But doctors and patients often have a difficult time deciding when surgery is the best option for treating this condition. By participating in the DEBUT study, you're helping researchers to figure this out.

#### Quarterly Surveys: Why So Many Questions



Each time you fill out a quarterly survey on your overall health, symptoms, and treatment decisions, you are helping researchers to better understand your care and learn what matters most to you.

It might seem like you're answering a lot of questions on a variety of topics, but know that your input will help us to develop future studies of new diverticulitis treatments and give the best treatment recommendations for patients in the future.



### WELCOME

to the first issue of the DEBUT study newsletter! Developed by our study team, this annual newsletter is designed to provide tips and tools for healthy living; share investigator stories; and keep you updated on the study's progress as well as the latest news from the research team.

A total of 7 hospitals and medical centers are currently recruiting patients across Washington and California, with more expected to launch in the coming months! The study has enrolled 100 patients to date.

If you'd like to make suggestions for future issues, please contact us at [debut@uw.edu](mailto:debut@uw.edu). You may also view this newsletter online at [debutstudy.org](http://debutstudy.org).

You may notice that some types of questions are asked more than once. Recurring survey questions may include those on:

- **Dietary changes**
- **Work productivity**
- **Symptoms**
- **Treatment status**
- **Quality of life**

This is because it's important for us to know if and how these things change and to understand the course of the condition over time. Asking these questions on a quarterly basis helps ensure you remember any changes that take place.

Thank you again for your participation and for making a difference in the lives of future patients!

# INVESTIGATOR SPOTLIGHT: DR. LISA STRATE



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Lisa Strate, MD, MPH, is a gastroenterologist at UW Medicine’s Harborview Medical Center who specializes in the care of patients with diverticular disease.

As a diverticulitis researcher for over 10 years, Dr. Strate is excited to be involved in DEBUT because the study will help to answer practical questions for clinicians and patients, including how diverticulitis and available treatments impact quality of life.

“Results of the DEBUT study will be essential for understanding the patient perspective in this disease and the reasons patients may choose or not choose to have surgery,” Dr. Strate says. “It is also going to have important outcomes that will prompt other studies on recurrent diverticulitis.”

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The DEBUT study is recruiting patients from emergency rooms, gastroenterology clinics, and surgical clinics. Dr. Strate emphasizes that this recruitment approach is key to learning how diverticulitis affects quality of life for patients.

“Gastroenterologists tend to see patients with recurrent disease or chronic symptoms, while surgeons tend to see patients with complicated disease who are more inclined to have surgery. It’s good to have a broad perspective,” she says. “The DEBUT study will give us more information on what things we might look at in terms of a future study.”

Recommendations for surgery to treat diverticulitis are currently based on factors such as the age of the patient and number of episodes. “We know from evidence that those factors don’t necessarily predict benefit from surgery. We also know that patients can have multiple episodes of diverticulitis that are unlikely to be life-threatening. But how are those recurrent episodes impacting the patient?” Dr. Strate says. “The DEBUT study will help us understand this.”

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR

Keep a list of your questions to discuss with your providers. Many patients have these common questions about diverticulitis, but you may have others as well:

- What causes diverticulitis?
- What are the symptoms of diverticulitis?
- What do I do if my symptoms become worse?
- What treatments are available?
- Will the diverticulitis come back?
- What are the complications of diverticulitis?
- How can I best manage my other health conditions along with diverticulitis?



To contact us or to update your address, please email [debut@uw.edu](mailto:debut@uw.edu) or call (206) 685-3094. You may also visit our website at [debutstudy.org](http://debutstudy.org).

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