

# A randomised, double-blind, parallel-group trial to assess mercaptopurine versus placebo to prevent or delay recurrence of Crohn's disease following surgical resection (TOPPIC)

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## Plain English summary

### The TOPPIC RCT

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## Plain English summary

Crohn's disease (CD) is a serious disease causing a swelling and ulceration of the gut wall. Most patients are treated with medicines but, after 10 years, two out of three people with CD need an operation. CD can often come back after an operation, and almost half of those who have one will need another one.

Several medicines have been tested to see if they help stop CD coming back after an operation. Azathioprine and mercaptopurine (MP) are medicines called thiopurines that alter the way that the immune system works. Over the last 10 years, they have become widely used for CD when it is not easily treated with other medicines but is not serious enough to need an operation. They have also been tested to see if they can stop CD coming back after an operation, but previous studies were relatively small and did not look at all relevant measures, so there was a need for a large modern study to look at the role of thiopurines again.

The Trial Of Prevention of Post operative Crohn's disease (TOPPIC) was a double-blind, randomised controlled trial done to find out whether the use of MP after an operation can prevent or delay CD coming back. Following informed consent, 240 patients were recruited into the study between 2007 and 2012 and randomly got either a daily dose of MP or matching placebo for 36 months. Data and samples were collected regularly during the study.

Mercaptopurine reduced how often CD came back after an operation only in smokers, who were also the people most at risk of recurrence.

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