



Heidi Drescher, MMS, PA-C
Physician Assistant,
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Ms. Drescher is a community based Physician Assistant and Registered Dietitian in Missoula, Montana. She delivers individualized care to rural IBD patients who might not otherwise have access to treatment. Her patient base encompasses a 200-mile radius, which also includes eastern Idaho and isolated agricultural towns near the Canadian border.

She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Human Nutrition at Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ. She then completed a Dietetic Internship at Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, NY. During her training, she developed an interest in the dynamic interplay of the gut biome and how it could influence the immune system and patient outcomes. As a result, she has long incorporated nutrition, wellness and mindfulness into her patient care.

Ms. Drescher earned a Master's of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies at Midwestern University in Glendale, AZ, enabling her to be more impactful in her approach to treating those living with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. As part of her comprehensive approach, she addresses the psychosocial, cultural and financial needs of each patient. She is a tireless, persistent advocate for her patients coordinating Patient Assistance for pharmaceutical coverage, facilitating referrals, and arranging travel to tertiary care centers up to 300 miles away are all a daily part of the services her small but dedicated team provides to her largely underinsured or uninsured patient community. Ms. Drescher considers it her mission to assist in any way possible, to minimize the impacts of these diseases, and help improve the quality of life for each patient.

Most recently, Ms. Drescher has focused on advancing APP education. With efforts put forth, she hopes that each GI NP/PA can confidently treat IBD and boldly advocate for their patients. In doing so, empowering both the patient and provider to strive for optimal disease management. She has completed IBD APP-centric CMEs for both AGA and ACG, is a member of the newly formed ACG APP Committee, and serves as GI and Hepatology Advanced Practice Providers (GHAPP) Education Co-Chair. She has been invited to speak at numerous national conferences/congresses, including the Crohns Colitis Congress and the AGA NP/PA Congress, providing best practices and approaches in treating IBD. In 2018 she published a paper in *The Journal for Nurse Practitioners* "Treat-to-Target Approach in Inflammatory Bowel Disease: The Role of Advanced Practice Providers".

In 2017, Ms. Drescher was awarded the Sherman Emerging Leader Prize for her pioneering work and high potential.