

RATES AND OUTCOMES OF HISTOLOGIC HEALING IN CROHN'S DISEASE

Chandler McMillan, BA¹; Louis Levine, MD MEd²; Yuanxin Liang, MD PhD⁴; Dhanpat Jain, MD^{3,4}; Jill K.J. Gaidos, MD³; Deborah Proctor, MD³; Badr Al Bawardy, MD³
¹Yale School of Medicine, ²Department of Internal Medicine, Yale School of Medicine, ³Section of Digestive Diseases, Yale School of Medicine, ⁴Department of Pathology, Yale School of Medicine



BACKGROUND

- Endoscopic healing has been associated with favorable long-term outcomes in patients with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).
- While histologic healing (HH) has been associated with favorable outcomes in patients with ulcerative colitis, the role of HH and its clinical significance in Crohn's disease (CD) remains unclear.

OBJECTIVES

- To determine the prevalence, predictors, and outcomes of HH in patients with CD.

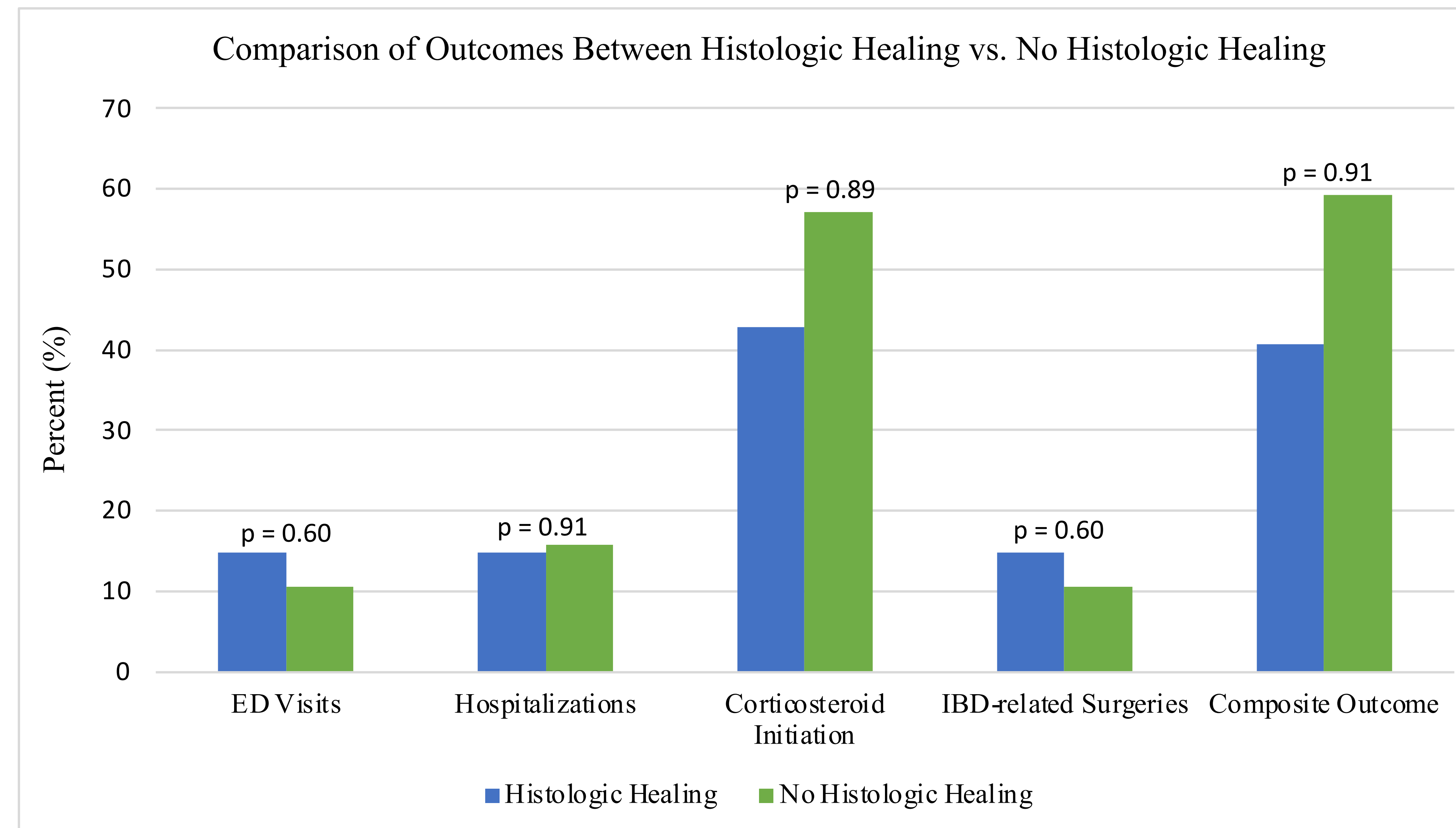
METHODS

- Single-center, retrospective review of CD patients age ≥ 18 between 1/1/2012 and 12/1/2021.
- Patients with and without endoscopic healing (defined as the absence of ulcers or erosions and/or Simple Endoscopic Score for CD (SES-CD) ≤ 4) were included.
- HH was defined as either normal or chronic inactive/quiescent inflammation on review of pathology reports.
- **Primary outcome:** prevalence and predictors of HH in both distal ileal and colonic CD.
- **Secondary outcomes:** CD-related ED visits, hospitalizations, surgeries and need for corticosteroids were analyzed individually and as a composite outcome.
- Continuous variables were analyzed using an unpaired student's t-test.
- Categorical variables were analyzed using a chi-square test.

Table 1. Comparison of Characteristics Between Histologic Healing vs. No Histologic Healing

Patient characteristics	Histologic Healing (n=27)	No Histologic Healing (n=38)	P-value
Baseline characteristics			
Age (years), mean (SD)	52.6 (16.0)	48.7 (17.8)	0.36
Female sex, n (%)	13 (48.2)	26 (68.4)	0.10
Smoking, n (%)	5 (18.5)	4 (10.5)	0.36
Disease duration (years), median (IQR)	16 (7-21)	11.5 (4-21.8)	0.38
Disease characteristics			
Prior bowel resection, n (%)	6 (22.2)	9 (23.7)	0.89
Presence of extraintestinal manifestations, n (%)	7 (25.9)	11 (28.9)	0.79
Perianal disease, n (%)	8 (29.6)	11 (28.9)	0.95
Medication factors			
On biologic, n (%)	19 (70.4)	19 (50.0)	0.10
On immunomodulator, n (%)	6 (22.2)	7 (18.4)	0.71

Figure 1. Outcomes of Histologic Healing vs. No Histologic Healing Among Patients Who Achieved Endoscopic Healing



*Composite outcome is defined by either discontinuation of therapy/dose escalation, steroid use, ED visits and/or hospitalizations related to active CD.

RESULTS

- A total of 90 patients with CD, including patients both with and without endoscopic healing, were included.
- The overall rate of HH for all patients was 30.0%.
- Ileal HH rate was 63.2% and colonic HH rate was 47.6%.
- Among patients with endoscopic healing (n=65), 41.5% (n=27) achieved HH.
- There were no significant differences between the HH and non-HH groups in terms of baseline and disease characteristics (Table 1).
- The percentage of patients on biologic medications was 70.4% in the HH group vs. 50% in the non-HH group (p=0.1).
- In the HH group, the rate of corticosteroid initiation was 42.9% vs. 57.1% (p=0.89).
- Rates of ED visits, hospitalizations, corticosteroid initiation, and IBD-related surgeries were not significantly different between the two groups (Figure 1).
- The composite outcome was noted in 40.7% of patients with HH vs. 59.3% of patients without HH (p=0.91).

CONCLUSIONS

- In this pilot study, 30% of patients with CD achieved HH, with a higher rate of ileal compared to colonic HH.
- Among patients with endoscopic healing, lack of HH was not associated with an increased risk of adverse clinical outcomes.
- Larger studies are needed to elucidate the predictors and significance of HH in patients with CD.