



Colon Cancer Awareness

What is colon cancer?

The colon is the longest part of the large intestine and its function is to absorb water and electrolytes from food. Colon cancer is one of the commonest types of cancer that affects both men and women. It usually starts from a clump of cells called polyps. Although most polyps are harmless, regular screening is important because early detection can prevent colon cancer from developing.

What causes colon cancer?

The exact cause of colon cancer is not known but the likelihood of developing colon cancer increases with:



Increasing age



A personal history of colon cancer, polyps or inflammatory bowel disease



A family history of colon cancer



Lack of physical activity



Having a low fibre high fat diet



Smoking



Alcohol



Obesity



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What are the possible symptoms of colon cancer?

Colon cancer does not always cause symptoms at first. It is important to discuss any changes with a doctor if there is:



Change in bowel habits such as frequent diarrhoea or constipation



Blood in the stool



Ongoing discomfort such as cramps or gas



A feeling that the bowels have not been emptied completely



Unexplained weight loss and tiredness.





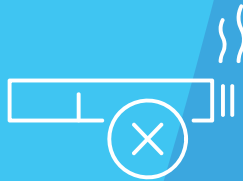
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How can I lower my risk of colon cancer?



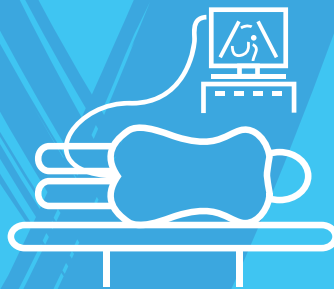
Stay active and do regular physical activity



Stop smoking



Eat less processed and red meat



Participate in the screening programme when invited