



Cancer of the Colon

New, less-invasive surgical options are offered to patients with Colon Cancer

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer of men and women in the United States. Approximately 150,000 new cases are diagnosed each year. About 60,000 people die of this disease annually.

Risk factors include aging, a diet high in meat and fat, physical inactivity, alcohol and nicotine consumption, family history, and a personal history of polyps or inflammatory bowel disease.

Surgery is the initial mainstay of treatment. Recently, Fall General Surgery has been offering, to some patients, a hand assisted laparoscopic partial colectomy. Using a laparoscopic approach, incisions are much smaller, inpatient hospital stay is shortened, and post-operative pain is less than in traditional open procedures.

An international study led by the Mayo Clinic was recently published in the New England Journal of Medicine. This study involved 872 patients with colon cancer. The intent of the study was to compare traditional open techniques with a less invasive laparoscopic procedure.

Findings of this study included:

- Same rate of recurrence
- Almost identical survival rates
- Shorter hospital stays in the laparoscopic group
- Decreased post-operative pain in the laparoscopic group

Laparoscopic colon surgery is not for everyone and is used selectively. Conversion from laparoscopic to an open technique may occur in 20-25% of cases.

Dr. Fall and Dr. Fogarty have recently received post-graduate training in this relatively new procedure and are excited to offer it as an option to select patients.

For more information regarding cancer of the colon and its treatments, call (715) 685-0656 or 1-877-344-2734.