

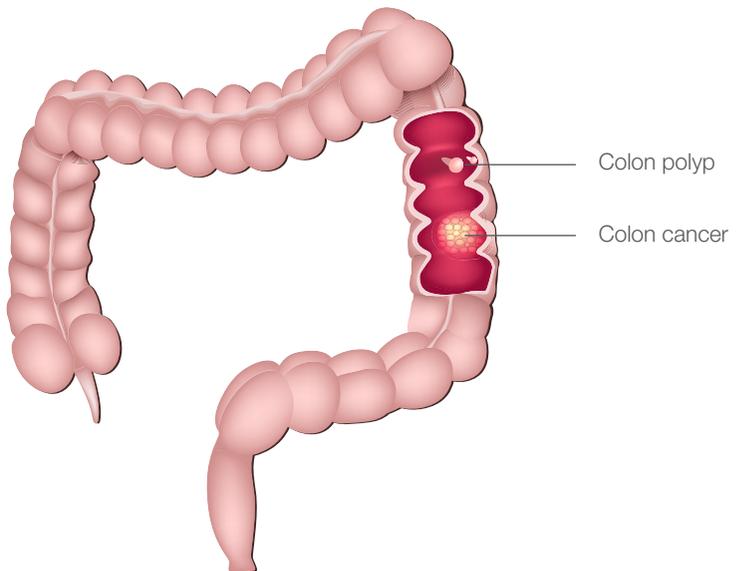
# Colorectal Cancer



The Department of Surgery sees patients for a wide range of surgical services. These include Colorectal, Endocrine, Breast, Upper GI, Bariatrics, Hepatobiliary, Plastics, Neurosurgery, Urology and Vascular Surgery. Our highly qualified consultants use minimally-invasive surgery and surgical endoscopy for diagnostic and therapeutic interventions in the treatment of these conditions. We provide inpatient and outpatient care with a 24-hour acute surgical service. Day surgery (endoscopy) and minor surgery (lumps and bumps) are also offered at Jurong Medical Centre.

## What is colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer is a cancer of the large intestine and arises from the lining of the colon and rectum. Most colorectal cancers begin as small, non-cancerous growths known as polyps that develop over time into cancerous growths.



## Is colorectal cancer common?

Colorectal cancer is the number one cancer in Singapore, but early detection can help to prevent and treat it. Like other diseases, it does not show obvious symptoms at the beginning but a health screening is a good way to detect it.

## Who is at risk?

You are at risk if you have:

- A personal history of colorectal polyps or cancer
- A personal history of inflammatory bowel disease
- A family history of colorectal cancer

## What are the symptoms?

There are no symptoms in the early stages, but as the condition progresses, you may notice:

- Blood in your stool
- Changes in your bowel habits
- Poorer appetite or unexplained weight loss
- Persistent abdominal discomfort (bloating, cramps or pain)



## How is diagnosis made?

If you notice signs and symptoms that suggest that you may have colorectal cancer, a colonoscopy can be done to confirm it. This will involve taking a sample (biopsy) for testing.

Other investigations include a CT scan or barium enema to confirm your doctor's diagnosis.

## Can colorectal cancer be treated?

There are three types of treatment for colorectal cancer:

- Surgery
- Chemotherapy
- Radiation

They may be used on their own or together in the treatment of colorectal cancer.



## How is colon cancer treated?

Surgery is recommended to remove colon cancer, its surrounding fat and lymph nodes. The surrounding structures are sometimes removed to improve outcomes. Surgery is usually an open or “keyhole” (laparoscopic) procedure that involves creating a temporary or permanent stoma if the intestine is unsuitable to be joined.

Depending on the stage of colorectal cancer, post-operative chemotherapy may be recommended to improve cure. A medical oncologist will discuss this with you.

### **Side effects of chemotherapy:**

- Fatigue
- Hair loss and diarrhoea
- Mouth sores
- Nausea and vomiting

## How is rectal cancer treated?

An open or “keyhole” (laparoscopic or robotic) surgery is performed to treat rectal cancer. Located within the pelvis and close to many vital structures, rectal cancer is first determined by an MRI scan. If cancer is advanced, combinational chemoradiotherapy may be used before surgery to improve outcomes.

Radiation therapy is a method that makes use of specially-delivered X-rays to kill cancer cells or shrink large tumours for easy removal. Some side effects include:

- Diarrhoea
- Fatigue
- Rectal bleeding

Chemotherapy may be required after surgery.

Patients will be given a temporary “protective” bag (stoma) if the colon is joined low in the pelvis to improve healing. A dye test will also be done six to eight weeks later to monitor the rate of healing. Following that, the stoma may be closed.

In rare occasions when rectal cancer is close to or involves the anal sphincter muscles, the anus may need to be removed. In such cases, a patient will be required to wear a permanent bag.



## How is colorectal cancer determined?

A combination of findings will help your doctor determine the stage of your colorectal cancer. Treatment will vary, but early detection and prompt/appropriate treatment can improve outcomes.

## For more information

### Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital

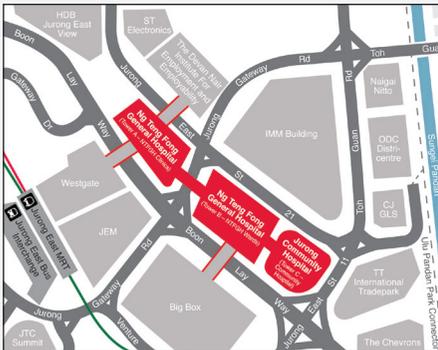
1 Jurong East St 21,  
Singapore 609606  
General enquiries: 6716 2000 Fax: 6716 5500  
www.juronghealth.com.sg

#### Clinical and appointment line hours (closed on Sundays and public holidays)

For appointments, please call 6716 2222  
Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm,  
Saturday 8.00am - 12.30pm

For dental appointments, please call 6716 2233  
Monday - Thursday 8.00am - 5.30pm  
Friday 8.00am - 5.00pm

#### Getting there



#### By train

Jurong East MRT Station

#### By bus

##### From Jurong East Bus Interchange

SBS 51, 52, 66, 78, 79, 97, 97e, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M, 160, 183, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

##### Along Boon Lay Way

SBS 99, Private bus service 625

### Jurong Medical Centre

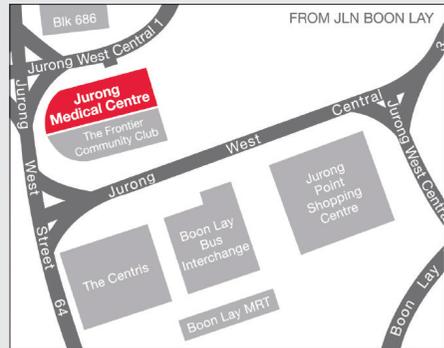
60 Jurong West Central 3,  
Singapore 648346  
General enquiries: 6551 7888 Fax: 6551 7880  
www.jmc.com.sg

#### Clinical and appointment line hours (closed on Sundays and public holidays)

For appointments, please call 6551 7828  
Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm,  
Saturday 8.00am - 12.30pm

For dental appointments, please call 6716 2233  
Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm

#### Getting there



#### By train

Boon Lay MRT Station

#### By bus

SBS 30, 79, 154, 157, 174, 179, 181, 182, 192, 193, 194, 198, 199, 240, 241, 242, 243 W/G, 246, 249, 251, 252, 254, 255, 257, 405  
SMRT 172, 178, 180, 187

#### Disclaimer:

The information in this brochure is meant for educational purposes and should not be used as substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek your doctor's advice before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.