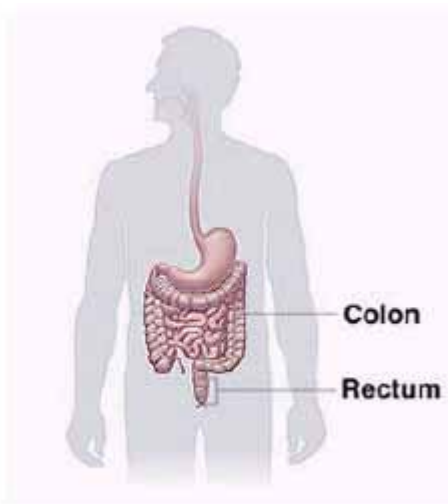


What is Colon and Rectal Cancer?

Cancer occurs when cells in the body begin changing and multiplying out of control. These cells can form lumps of tissue called tumors. Cancer that forms in the colon is called colon cancer. Cancer that forms in the rectum is called rectal cancer. These cancers are also called colorectal cancer.

Understanding the Colon and Rectum

The large intestine is a long, winding tube through which food travels in the final stages of digestion. The main portion of the large intestine is the **colon**. The end portion, through which waste leaves the body, is the **rectum**.



When Colon and Rectal Cancer Forms

Colorectal cancer forms when cells in the colon or rectum change and multiply abnormally. Over time, cancer cells destroy healthy tissue and can interfere with the working of the colon and rectum.

Colorectal cancer may spread beyond the colon and rectum to other parts of the body. This spread is called **metastasis**. The more cancer spreads, the harder it is to treat.

Treatment Options for Colon and Rectal Cancer

You and your healthcare provider will discuss a treatment plan that's best for your needs.

Treatment options may include:

- **Surgery** to remove the cancerous parts of the colon and rectum and some surrounding tissue.
- **Chemotherapy**, which uses strong medications to kill cancer cells.
- **Radiation therapy**, which uses directed rays of energy to kill cancer cells.