

# COLON CANCER

*Life is a long lesson in humility. –J.M Barrie*

## Colon cancer - Basics

- A new and abnormal growth of tissue arising from the luminal surface of the large bowel
- The most common gastrointestinal cancer and the second leading cause of death by cancer (behind lung cancer) in the US.
- Most colorectal cancer cases are connected to diet and lifestyle.
- It takes between 10-15 years for abnormal colorectal cells to grow into polyps. Regular screening allows polyp detection and removal

## Signs and symptoms

- Abdominal pain
- Rectal bleeding
- Change in bowel habits
- Iron-deficiency anemia

## Screening

- Stool-based tests or colonoscopy



## Prevention strategies

- Avoid processed and ultraprocessed foods, as well as vegetable (seed) oils—such as soybean, canola, sunflower, safflower, and corn—which can disrupt gut bacteria and promote chronic inflammation.
- Limit processed meats like bacon, ham, salami, pepperoni, hot dogs, and sausages, which are preserved with salt or chemical additives, as their consumption can increase the risk of colon cancer.
- Reduce exposure to environmental toxins and minimize unnecessary use of antibiotics.
- Eat a diet rich in vegetables, fruits, and herbs. These foods are high in dietary fiber and phytochemicals that help reduce inflammation and eliminate carcinogens.
- Ensure your vitamin D levels are at or above 40 ng/mL.
- Maintain adequate intake of magnesium and selenium—higher magnesium intake is linked to a lower risk of colorectal tumors.
- Limit sugar and alcohol, and avoid tobacco use, maintain a healthy weight and stay physically active.