REFLUX & SWALLOWING CENTER

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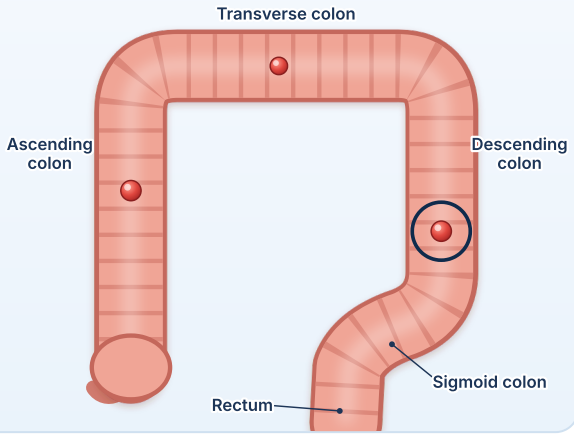
# Colonic Polyps

## Small growths in the large bowel (colon)

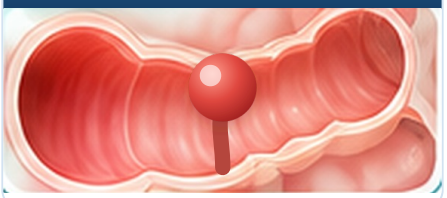
**Finding and removing polyps helps prevent bowel cancer.**

A polyp is a small growth on the lining of the large bowel. Polyps are common and usually cause no symptoms. Some can slowly turn into cancer over many years, so they are removed when found.

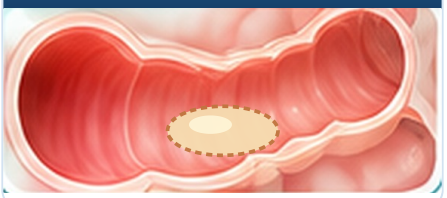
### What is a polyp?




### Polyp on a stalk (inside view)



### Flat polyp (inside view)



### How common?

Very common, especially after the age of 50

**1 in 3** people over 50 have a polyp

**Most polyps never become cancer.**

### Main types of polyps

| **Adenomas** (most common) | **Sessile serrated lesions** (flat) | **Hyperplastic** (usually harmless) |
|---|---|---|
| The main type that can slowly turn into cancer. | Flat, pale, often right-sided; can also become cancer. | Usually small, in the lower bowel; very low risk. |

### Risk factors and symptoms

- Age over 45 to 50
- Family history of polyps or cancer
- Usually no symptoms
- Sometimes bleeding or low iron

### Screening:

Do the **free home bowel test** every 2 years from age 45 to 74 (National Bowel Cancer Screening Program).

### Lowering your risk of polyps and bowel cancer

**Good sources of fibre**

- Fruits & vegetables
- Whole grains (oats, brown rice)
- Legumes (lentils, chickpeas)
- Nuts and seeds

**Other healthy habits**

- Regular physical activity
- Maintain a healthy weight
- No smoking, less alcohol

**Limit red and processed meat (ham, bacon, salami).**
A diet high in fibre and low in processed meat lowers bowel cancer risk.

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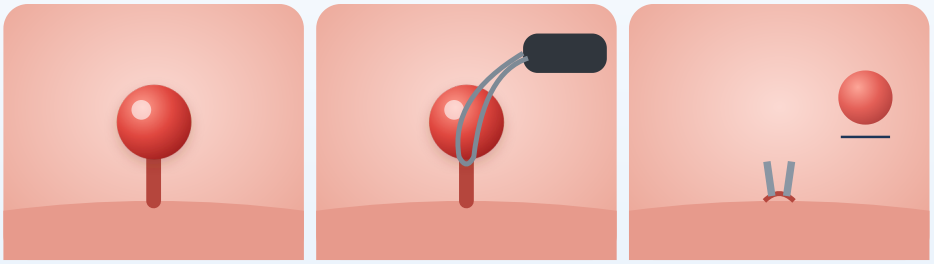
# Polyp Removal

## Polypectomy during colonoscopy and follow-up

Polyps are usually removed during your colonoscopy without any pain, and sent to the laboratory. Your results decide when your next colonoscopy is due.

**Dr Zad will send your results and your next colonoscopy date to you and your GP.**

### How polyps are removed



**1. Polyp found** during colonoscopy

**2. Wire snare** placed around it

**3. Removed, sent to** the lab; clip if needed

### When is my next colonoscopy?

**1 or 2 small adenomas**

Usually 10 years, or back to the home screening test after 4 years

**More or larger polyps**

Usually 1 to 5 years, depending on number, size and type

**Your own plan**

Based on your pathology; we will let you and your GP know

### Possible complications (rare)

- Bleeding, up to 2 weeks later
- Tummy pain or bloating
- Perforation (a hole in the bowel), very rare

### After polyp removal

- Normal diet the same day unless told otherwise
- Check with us about blood thinners
- Rest the day of the procedure
- No driving for 24 hours after sedation
- Results are sent to you and your GP

### Seek urgent medical attention if you have:

- Heavy bleeding or clots
- Severe or worsening pain
- Fever
- Feeling faint or very unwell
- Repeated vomiting

### Your personalised advice

Sources: Cancer Council Australia Clinical Practice Guidelines for Surveillance Colonoscopy (2019); US Multi-Society Task Force post-polypectomy surveillance (2020); National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. Reviewed by Dr Ali Zad, November 2026. General educational information only, not a substitute for personal medical advice.

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