

Single-incision surgery

The Department of Surgery of the University of Hong Kong has successfully carried out single-incision Laparoscopic surgery on patients suffering from colorectal cancer.

The operation requires only one small incision (about 3 cms) in the bellybutton, through which newly developed flexible laparoscope and roticulated instruments are inserted to perform the operation. The technique has been hailed as a significant advancement in minimally invasive surgery.

It has been used by the university on eight colorectal cancer patients so far – all successfully.

Colorectal cancer is the second most common cancer in Hong Kong. It usually starts in either the colon or the rectum. Surgery has proved to be the most effective treatment. There are two types of surgery: the conventional open surgery and Laparoscopic surgery. The latter is preferred nowadays.

Open surgery is done by cutting a large opening in the abdomen to perform the operation. Laparoscopic surgery is conducted through tiny incisions in the abdomen through which very fine tubes (5 - 10 mm in diameter) fitted with minute cameras are inserted.

Single-incision laparoscopic surgery is an improved technique, requiring only one small incision (about 3 cm) in the bellybutton. The healing process is faster leaving only one post-operation scar.

The department plans to use this new technique in conducting other operations in future.