



Bowel cancer is Australia's second most common cancer in both men and women. In 2015, there were 4346 bowel cancer deaths, second only to lung cancer.

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'Most people think it's an old person's disease,' said Dr Guru Iyngkaran, a Gastroenterologist with Darwin Day Surgery. 'But like all cancers, it doesn't discriminate, and people in their early twenties have died of bowel cancer.'

Depending on where the cancer begins, bowel cancer may be called colon or rectal cancer, or colorectal cancer.

'It develops from the inner lining of the bowel and is usually preceded by growths called polyps. These may become invasive cancer if undetected,' adds Dr Guru.

'Symptoms include changes in bowel habits, changes in stool consistency, blood in the stool and abdominal discomfort. These symptoms should be taken seriously and investigated urgently.'

In 2014, 15,253 new cases were diagnosed in Australia. On average one in eleven men and one in every sixteen women are at risk.

'Men are more susceptible and also less likely to consult their doctor,' he continues. 'But early detection means less invasive surgery and longer-term prevention.'

Factors that increase your risk of bowel cancer include inherited genetic risk and family history, inflammatory bowel disease, polyps, smoking and obesity.

'Early cases usually begin as non-cancerous polyps. These often have no symptoms but can be detected by screening. For this reason, doctors recommend screenings for those at high risk or over the age of 50,' he advises. 'Most polyps can be removed during a colonoscopy, including some early colon cancers.' This surgical procedure is performed at Darwin Day Surgery by their experienced team of qualified doctors and nurses.

Since 2012 Darwin Day Surgery has been delivering personalised, quality patient centred care, that ensures the safety and well-being of all their patients at the highest possible standard.

For further information call Darwin Day Surgery T: 8920 2899

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