

Surgery breakthrough for bowel cancer patients

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A surgical technique being pioneered in Tasmania halves the recovery time for patients undergoing major bowel cancer surgery.

Calvary Health's Emilio Mignanelli is one of only two Australian surgeons performing the technique.

It involves a single small incision through the belly button instead of up to five cuts to a patient's abdomen.

Traditional keyhole surgery requires up to five incisions and an average recovery time of eight days in hospital.

Dr Mignanelli says the new technique is less painful, leaves a smaller scar and halves the time spent in hospital.

"For the patients who had undergone the single incision, the new procedure, their length of stay was four days," he said.

"Nearly 50 per cent of patients will go home two days after their procedure, which is a lot different to what it has been in the past."

Dr Mignanelli says the procedure is still relatively unknown.

"It is so new that a lot of patients don't really know that it exists," he said.

"Some patients are still shocked to find that we can take [the] bowel out using keyhole surgery."

"When you can tell them that you can do it through one incision they are quite surprised and very pleased."

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Dr Emilio Mignanelli says the new technique is less painful and halves the time spent in hospital. (ABC News)

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