



ROCHESTER
GENERAL
SURGERY



What is a colectomy?

A colectomy is the removal of a portion or all of your colon. A colectomy can be performed for cancer or benign reasons such as diverticulosis. Surgery can be performed minimally invasive or robotically, or using an open technique or long incision. If surgery is performed in an elective setting utilizing a bowel preparation then your colon can likely be connected back together. If you have surgery under urgent circumstances involving a perforation or hole in the colon, or extreme infection then an ostomy may be necessary.

What is an ostomy?

An ostomy is a procedure that creates an opening in the abdominal wall, bringing a portion of the bowel (either colon or small bowel) through the opening so stool can be allowed to pass into a bag.

What are other risks of surgery?

As discussed above you may require an ostomy. Other risks include bleeding, infection, risk of anastomotic leak or breakdown, abscess, injury to surrounding structures such as bladder or ureter. Medical risks include blood clots in the legs or lungs, urinary tract infection, pneumonia, heart attack, stroke, pneumonia or death.

How do you prepare for surgery?

You will be given antibiotics and medication to take prior to surgery that will clear out your bowels in preparation for surgery. You will be asked to stop smoking, enhance your cardiovascular health with daily exercise, improve your hemoglobin A1C if you are a diabetic and optimize other disease states if possible.

What can I expect after surgery?

This is major surgery requiring a stay in the hospital. Your hospital stay may be a few days to a week. Prior to discharge you will need to have return of bowel function, tolerance of food, absence of infection, and pain control with oral medication. You can expect to have pain. You will be given medication to help alleviate the pain and can be sent home with pain medication as well. Loose stools can be normal. A small amount of blood in your stools can also be expected.