

Risks of HIPEC

When undergoing any surgical procedure, there is always the possibility that a complication can arise. The most common complications following cytoreductive surgery with HIPEC are bleeding and infection, which can occur with any surgery. Other less common complications include:

- The formation of blood clots in the legs that can travel to other parts of the body, such as the lungs.
- Development of an enterocutaneous fistula (an opening between the intestines and the abdominal skin) or an anastomotic leak (a leak that may occur when sections of the intestines are surgically reconnected).
- Inability to consume enough calories after surgery. When this happens, patients are given nutrition intravenously (TPN) to help keep up with their caloric needs.

What to Expect After Surgery with HIPEC

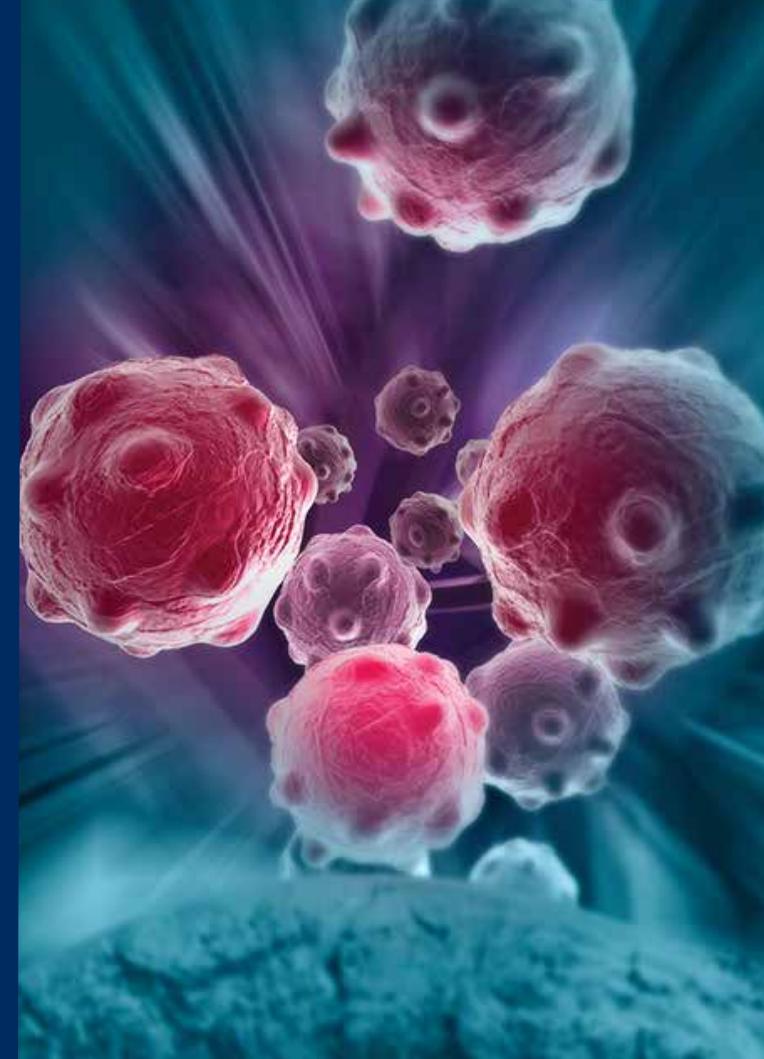
Patients typically remain in the hospital for 12-10 days following surgery. Once a patient is discharged from the hospital, the team from Al Zahra Hospital Dubai Cancer Centre will work with the patient and their family to ensure that home care needs are met. This includes the coordination of a visiting nurse, physical therapist and/or occupational therapist if necessary.

Following the surgery with HIPEC, it is not uncommon for patients to feel fatigued for 3-2 months post-operatively. While it is important to rest during this period of recovery, it is also important to get up, move around, and remain as active as possible. Remaining active will help combat fatigue as well as prevent possible complications of surgery, such as blood clots forming in the legs and pneumonia. Patients should continue doing the things they enjoy and set goals throughout their recovery. While the recovery process takes time, setting and accomplishing goals, no matter how small, helps patients realize the progress they are making throughout their recovery period.



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Recent advances in cancer treatments provide Al Zahra Hospital Dubai Cancer Centre more effective treatment options for certain late stage gastrointestinal cancers than ever before.

Recent studies have shown that cytoreductive surgery followed by hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy (HIPEC) is beneficial for certain patients with late-stage gastrointestinal cancers such as colorectal cancers. The procedure can potentially extend their life and also improve quality of life for patients with late stage disease.

What is HIPEC?

HIPEC is a cancer treatment that involves filling the abdominal cavity with chemotherapy drugs that have been heated. Also known as “hot chemotherapy,” HIPEC is performed after the surgeon removes tumors or lesions from the abdominal area.

HIPEC is used to treat cancers that have spread to the lining of the abdominal cavity, such as those of the appendix, colon, stomach, and ovaries. HIPEC is an alternative, innovative method of delivering chemotherapy. Unlike systemic chemotherapy delivery, which circulates throughout the body, HIPEC delivers chemotherapy directly to cancer cells in the abdomen.

HIPEC has been shown to be an effective treatment option for certain peritoneal surface malignancy cancers such as selected stage IV colon cancer and other gastrointestinal cancers including appendiceal cancers and pseudomyxoma peritonei.

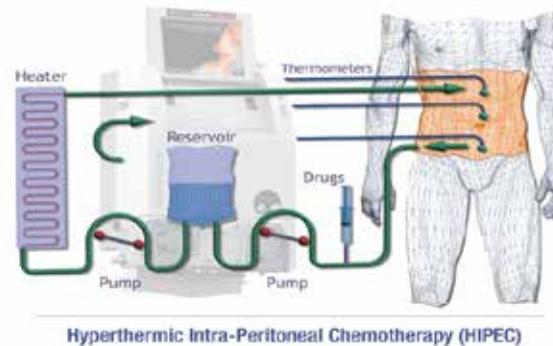
The procedure

The technique is a two-step process:

- Surgically removing any visible tumor or cancer, and then
- Delivering heated chemotherapy drugs to the affected area.

During the second phase of treatment a heated chemotherapy solution is circulated in the abdominal cavity to treat any cancer cells that may remain. The chemotherapy is administered in high dosages to the targeted area and washed out after 90 minutes, thereby limiting the systemic toxicity. The procedure usually takes eight to 18 hours.

The combination of heat and chemotherapy is believed to be more effective than standard chemotherapy treatment for certain patients because it can access and kill more cancer cells than can be found with the naked eye.



What are the benefits of HIPEC?

HIPEC has several advantages when compared to the standard chemotherapy:

- HIPEC is usually administered as a single treatment. On the other hand, standard chemotherapy requires several sessions given over many weeks or months. Standard chemotherapy, given over a long period, could also add to a patient's expenses, and repeated visits to the doctor's might require the individual to take more time off from work.
- With HIPEC treatment, the drugs are delivered directly into the abdominal cavity which minimizes risks of toxicity, as the drug does not enter the whole body's

circulation system. More importantly, any side effects that occur are of a much shorter duration because the abdomen is rinsed and all leftover drugs are removed at the end of treatment. With standard oral or intravenous chemotherapy, the medication spreads to all body parts and causes a variety of adverse effects.

- HIPEC is a much more “focused” treatment and is directed towards a patient's specific kind of cancer. Because the treatment is so focused, much higher doses of chemotherapeutic drugs can be used. This way of administering chemotherapy is much more likely to kill any remaining or lingering cancer cells when compared to standard systemic therapy.
- The heating-up of the anti-cancer drugs can kill cancer cells more effectively than conventional chemotherapy.
- Even though HIPEC is a relatively new type of treatment, recent reports show that in patients who have been diagnosed with mesothelioma early in the cancer's development, it can cure nearly %25 of patients. This is a significant statistical improvement when HIPEC is compared against systemic chemotherapy, where cure is very rarely achieved.
- Several studies have now reported that in selected cancer patients, HIPEC treatment can improve a person's overall life expectancy. Studies further report that a combination of cytoreductive surgery and HIPEC may be more effective and beneficial than chemotherapy or surgery alone.
- The quality of life after cytoreductive surgery and HIPEC is also very much improved. There are minimal long-term side effects like those seen with systemic chemotherapy. Following recovery these individuals are able to resume daily living activities and have faster recovery from the surgery.
- The advantage of such a surgery is that it can remove all obvious cancer before it can cause complications like fluid buildup and/or bowel obstruction.