

Laparoscopic surgery achieves similar survival rates in rectal cancer

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(HealthDay)—Patients with localized rectal cancer may achieve similar survival rates by having minimally invasive laparoscopic surgery, instead of more invasive open surgery, according to new research published in the April 2 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

H. Jaap Bonjer, M.D., Ph.D., chairman of the department of surgery at VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam, and colleagues randomly assigned 1,044 patients with rectal cancer, seen at 30 hospitals, to either [laparoscopic surgery](#) or [open surgery](#).

Three years after the procedures, the cancer recurrence rate was 5 percent for both groups. The researchers found that 74.8 percent of those who had the [laparoscopic procedure](#) survived without recurrent disease, compared with 70.8 percent of those who had undergone open

surgery. The overall survival rates were 86.7 percent for those who had the laparoscopic procedure and 83.6 percent for those who underwent open surgery.

Overall, "laparoscopic surgery for [rectal cancer](#) has proven to be safe, and results in the same cancer outcomes as open surgery," Bonjer told *HealthDay*. "Patients can have laparoscopic surgery without any greater concern about their cancer recurring or survival," he added. "Patients can expect less pain after laparoscopic surgery and also quicker recovery than after open surgery."

The study was supported by Ethicon Endo-Surgery Europe.

More information: [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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