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Singapore doctors employ new technology to locate cancer cells

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Tan Tock Seng Hospital is the first in Singapore to adopt the procedure.



Doctors at Tan Tock Seng Hospital are using a new technology called navigational bronchoscopy, which uses virtual reality and a GPS-guided system to find and extract suspected cancer cells in the lungs.

This hospital is the first in Singapore to adopt the procedure. It has been used in 33 patients so far, with no complications. Dr Akash Verma helped bring in the procedure to Tan Tock Seng hospital.

In the procedure, a three-dimensional road map"is created and it shows several routes a doctor can take to insert a tube into the lung to the target site with the suspected cancer cells.

The on-screen map helps to guide the procedure, showing how close or far away the tube is, in centimetres, to the site. Once the spot is reached, tissue samples can be taken using biopsy forceps or a triple-needle brush inside the tube.

The doctors feel that though a more precise diagnostic tool does not necessarily solve that problem, it improves the outlook for lung cancer patients.