

Questions for your Surgeon:

1. What percentage of your practice is breast reconstruction? How many times have you performed this procedure? How many failures have you had with this procedure?
2. Which type of reconstruction am I the best candidate for? What are the risks and benefits of this procedure?
3. How many surgeries are involved with this procedure? How long is the recovery for each step?
4. What are the complications that can arise from this type of procedure? How are complications handled?
5. What is the lifetime maintenance requirement for each procedure?
6. Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
7. May I see your before and after photos?
8. Do you have a former patient that I can talk to over the phone?
9. What are the next steps - including insurance approvals and preparing for surgery?
10. Will you be making my other breast similar to my new breast? How and when do you do this?
11. What if I am dissatisfied with the outcome?
12. I am uninsured. Do you provide pro-bono (for free) surgeries? Does your hospital have a foundation to help uninsured, or are there any programs locally you can refer me to? Would you be willing to work with me at a "cash pay" rate, on a payment plan?

If you are uninsured or need assistance to attain reconstructive surgery, contact the My Hope Chest organization to see if you qualify for assistance.

Fast Facts

The most recent data shows nearly 286,000* women a year survive breast cancer. There were 101,000** reconstruction surgeries that same year. Out of the 185,670 survivors left, how many WANTED but were unable to attain their desired reconstruction surgery due to high co-pays or lack of insurance?

Help us find the answer, take our survey at myhopechest.org.

The cost of a typical reconstruction for an uninsured individual at a "cash pay" rate is \$25,000. The cost of the "Flap" breast reconstruction ranges upwards of \$45,000 and requires a hospital stay of 3-5 days. For uninsured survivors, this surgery is often not an option. *American Cancer Society
**American Society of Plastic Surgeons

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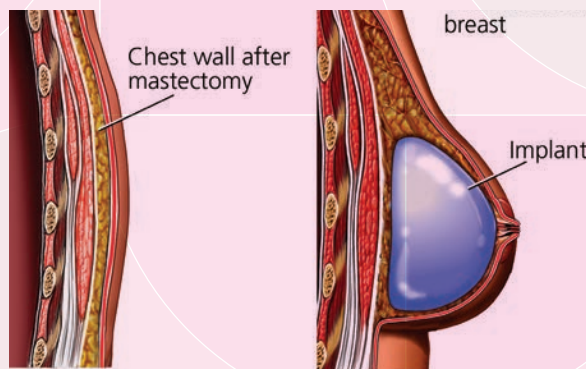
Breast Reconstruction...

...Education and Options

“The **final step** of breast cancer *treatment*”

The Process

Your Breast Reconstruction may begin at time of mastectomy, an “immediate” reconstruction or at a later date, a “delayed” reconstruction. Both are perfectly safe. Some patients prefer to wait until they have completed their recommended cancer treatment, others, often with insurance, elect to begin reconstruction at time of mastectomy... it is a personal choice. A typical reconstruction is a two or three-step process and takes up to a one year to complete.



Implants

There are TWO types of implants used in breast reconstruction, Saline (Salt Water) or Silicon. Manufacturing of implants is highly regulated. At this time, there are only 3 FDA approved manufacturers in the United States. Speak to your surgeon to learn more about which implant choice would create the breast reconstruction you desire.

Most Common Types of Breast Reconstruction

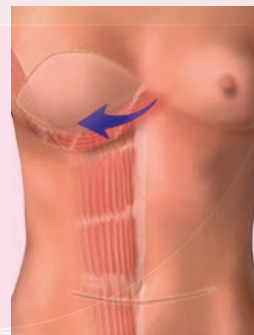
TISSUE EXPANDER – Typically a 3 step process, expanding the chest skin gradually to accept silicon or saline implants. This can be done as an out patient surgery. Or, Hospital Stay is 1-2 days with full recovery in several weeks.

DIEP OR TRAM FLAP – Uses your own body tissue usually from the belly. Hospital Stay is 2-5 days with full recovery time from several weeks to several months.

LATISSIMUS DORSI – Using the back muscle to create a breast mound. Often used for reconstruction on skin that has been radiated. Hospital Stay is 1-3 days with full recovery in several weeks.

*Please visit myhopechest.org for more detailed information and a video on reconstruction surgery.

Examples of:



Flap Procedure



Latissimus Dorsi Procedure

Please visit
www.myhopechest.org for complete video
explanation of a reconstructive surgery.

Final Steps

Nipple Areola Reconstruction and Tattoo.

After the breast mound is completely healed, the nipple creation is performed in a day surgery or often in office procedure. The tattooing of the areola is seldom painful and performed in as little as 15 minutes in the office or in the case of a delayed reconstruction, can be created at a permanent cosmetic office.

Recovery

Every cancer journey is personal... from the first step of treatment to the last. Should you chose to have breast reconstruction, your healing process will also be a personal one.

Depending on the type of reconstruction, strenuous activity should be avoided for a period of time. Be proactive, ask your surgeon questions following your surgery.

Know Your Rights

The Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act (WHCRA) of 1998 requires all health insurance providers and health maintenance organizations (HMOs) that pay for mastectomy also pay for:

- Reconstruction of the breast removed with mastectomy.
- Surgery and reconstruction of the opposite breast to get a symmetrical look.
- Prostheses.
- Treatment of any complications of surgery, including lymphedema.