



Breast cancer surgery

Use this grid to help you and your healthcare professional talk about how best to treat breast cancer.

Frequently asked questions	Lumpectomy with radiotherapy	Mastectomy
What is removed?	The cancer lump is removed, with some surrounding tissue.	The whole breast is removed.
Which surgery is best for long-term survival?	Survival rates are the same for both options.	Survival rates are the same for both options.
What are the chances of cancer coming back in the breast?	Breast cancer will come back in the breast in about 10 in every 100 women (10%) in the 10 years after a lumpectomy. Recent improvements in treatment may have reduced this risk.	Breast cancer will come back in the area of the scar in about 5 in every 100 women (5%) in the 10 years after a mastectomy. Recent improvements in treatment may have reduced this risk.
Will I need more than one operation?	Possibly, if there are still cancer cells in the breast after the lumpectomy. This can occur in up to 20 in every 100 women (20%).	No, unless you choose breast reconstruction
How long will it take to recover?	Most women are home within 24 hours of surgery.	Most women are home within 48 hours of surgery.
Will I need radiotherapy?	Yes, for up to six weeks after surgery	Radiotherapy is not usually given after a mastectomy.
Will I need to have my lymph glands removed?	Yes, some or all of the lymph glands in the armpit are usually removed.	Yes, some or all of the lymph glands in the armpit are usually removed.
Will I need chemotherapy?	You may be offered chemotherapy, but this does not depend on the operation you choose.	You may be offered chemotherapy, but this does not depend on the operation you choose.
Will I lose my hair?	Hair loss is common after chemotherapy.	Hair loss is common after chemotherapy.