



Breast Reconstruction

5 questions for your **breast surgeon** to help you feel prepared and confident

1 What are my breast reconstruction options?

If you'd like to have breast reconstruction, make sure you discuss all your options with your breast surgeon—but don't stop there. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, it's best when your breast surgeon *and* plastic surgeon discuss your options and come up with a plan together that fits your lifestyle and your unique situation. Remember, you can always choose to forgo breast reconstruction, too.

2 How will you work with my plastic surgeon to plan my mastectomy in a way that supports my reconstruction?

Breast surgeons and plastic surgeons often discuss treatment optimization and aesthetic outcome separately with patients, but a multidisciplinary team approach is recommended in all aspects of breast cancer management. Since reconstruction is often performed immediately following the mastectomy, both surgeries contribute to your final result. Of course, ensuring you are cancer free is always the top priority.

3 How will my mastectomy affect my breast reconstruction and final outcome?

While your breast surgeon's primary concern is your health and eliminating the cancer, he or she understands that for many women, breast reconstruction is also a key part of treatment. Ask your surgeon about contributing factors to pave the way for a successful reconstruction, including scar placement and vascularity of the breast skin, among others.

4 What are some considerations when choosing between a unilateral (single breast) mastectomy and a bilateral (double breast) mastectomy?

There are many reasons why you should consider both procedures, including oncologic risk, recurrent imaging, family history, and symmetry. Discuss the pros and cons of each with your surgeon before making a decision.

5 What will I look like immediately after my mastectomy?

Having an idea of what you'll experience when you wake up from surgery may help you feel more in control. The type of breast reconstruction procedure you receive will play a significant role. Ask about the size and placement of your scar, how much swelling you might have, and what your postmastectomy shape will be.

Ask your surgeon any and all questions you may have to become well informed and confident in your decisions.