

What to Expect After Nipple Reconstruction and Areola Tattooing

Nipple reconstruction is often completed as an out-patient procedure, using a local anesthetic, and there is usually no need for an overnight stay. Here are a few things to expect and prepare for in connection with this procedure. Please keep in mind that everyone's experience is different and you should always consult your surgeon.

- You may have a plastic nipple protector over your nipple, preventing it from being flattened. This will remain on your breast for about a week.
- If you don't have a plastic protector, try not to put any pressure on your nipple to avoid flattening.
- You may leave your procedure wearing a surgical bra that may need to remain on for approximately 5-7 days.
- Your nipple may be discolored, swollen and you will be able to see your stitches. It will take about a month for the nipple to appear normal.
- Most women do not have any feeling in their nipple following surgery.
- Avoid the nipple area during sexual activity until it has fully healed.

If you opt for areola tattooing, your plastic surgeon may perform this procedure in his/her office. This is typically a fairly quick procedure (around 15-40 minutes). Here are a few things to expect and prepare for when undergoing areola tattooing. Please keep in mind that everyone's experience is different and you should always consult your surgeon.

- The tattooing process is not usually painful but your nipple may feel sore.
- Your tattoo may bleed ink and/or blood before it scabs over. You will have gauze to protect your clothing from the bleeding. The scab typically comes off over several days and will reveal your tattoo.
- It is important to keep your tattoo moisturized so that the color remains intact.
- Wear loose clothing until your tattoo has healed.

Important Information: Every patient is different and their reconstruction options and their results may vary. All depictions on the site are for illustration purposes only. Whether or not you have breast reconstruction is a decision you need to make in consultation with your physician. Only you and your physician can determine the best option for you. Please ask your doctor to explain the benefits and risk of various reconstruction options and whether they are right for you.

Copyright © 2010 LifeCell Corporation. All Rights Reserved. LifeCell™ and AlloDerm® are trademarks of LifeCell Corporation.