

What to Expect

Day of Surgery

The first stage of reconstruction, which can be carried out at the same time as mastectomy or some time later, is completed using a general anesthesia. General anesthesia involves medication that will put you to sleep during the surgery. You should discuss this with your surgeon. You must plan to have someone drive you home from the hospital and, if possible, stay with you during your first days of recovery.

The surgery will be completed in your surgeon's elected hospital or surgical center. The timing of the operation can vary greatly depending on the type of reconstruction you have chosen. Here are a few things to expect and prepare for on the day of your surgery. Please keep in mind that everyone's experience is different and you should always consult your surgeon.

- You will wake up with a new breast mound.
- You may wake up from surgery feeling groggy and/or very tired. Have someone there to drive you home.
- You may have compression sleeves on your legs to help with circulation.
- Although you may be on pain medication, you may still feel sore.
- You may have drains coming out of your underarms to assist in healing from your surgery (and from your stomach if you had an autologous reconstruction using tissue from your stomach area).

If you have an autologous breast reconstruction:

- You may have a catheter in your bladder which will be removed after surgery.
- The area from which tissue was taken to form your new breast(s) may also be sore.
- It may be difficult for you to get out of bed alone.

If you have a breast implant reconstruction:

- You may have limited arm mobility.
- You may be able to get out of bed with the help of someone else *if you have permission from your surgeon*.
- You may be able to use the bathroom by yourself *if you have permission from your surgeon*.

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.

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