

Glossary

AlloDerm® Regenerative Tissue Matrix

Derived from donated human tissue and fundamentally acts as a replacement for missing tissue in the body. This tissue goes through a proprietary process where cells are completely removed without damaging the integrity of the tissue. This process preserves the delicate and critical tissue components that allow someone to use the tissue and accept it into her body as her own. It provides strong, intact support for breast implant reconstruction procedures.

Areola

The darkened area of breast around the nipple.

Autologous

Derived from the same individual's body. In an autologous reconstruction, the breast is shaped from existing muscle, fat and skin taken from other areas of your body, such as the abdomen, back, buttocks or thigh.

Bottoming out and stretch deformity

The implant drops lower than desired as a result of the skin stretching.

Capsular contracture

Shrinking, or tightening, of the scar tissue around the breast implant, causing the breast to harden.

Chemotherapy

A chemical used to kill cancerous cells in your body.

Connective tissue

One of four main types of tissue that exist in the body. This material is composed of fibers that support body tissues and organs.

Delayed reconstruction

When your breast reconstruction is performed in a separate surgery on a date after the mastectomy procedure is complete.

DIEP (Deep Inferior Epigastric Artery Perforator) Flap

A DIEP Flap reconstruction uses fat and skin from the lower stomach but does not require the removal of any muscle.

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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Glossary (continued)

Exposure or extrusion of implant

When the skin covering the breast is too thin, perhaps as a result of radiation treatment, the implant may break through the skin.

Free Flap

One type of TRAM Flap reconstruction, requiring microsurgery, in which the skin, fat, blood vessels and muscle are cut from the original location and then are attached to the blood vessels in the chest.

Full muscle coverage

One technique option when opting to be reconstructed with an implant, in which muscles in the immediate area of the breast are used to fully cover and support the implant.

Gluteal muscles

Muscles contained in the buttock and thigh region that support the body when standing, and aid in the motion of spreading the legs.

Hernia

Occurs when pressure pushes an organ or tissue through a weak spot in the abdominal wall.

High riding breast

Occurs when implants are too high on the chest wall.

Immediate reconstruction

When both the mastectomy and reconstruction are performed during the same procedure.

Implant

A prosthesis used to alter the size of a woman's breast, either for aesthetic or reconstruction purposes. The two most common types of implants are saline and silicone.

Implant visibility

When the skin covering the breast is too thin, perhaps as a result of radiation treatment, the implant may become visible through the skin.

Lateral malposition

When the breast border has moved, causing the implant to move to the side.

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Glossary (continued)

Latissimus Dorsi

The largest and strongest muscle in the back. Located in the lower back, this muscle aids in moving the upper arm downward and upward, and rotating it inward.

Lobular carcinoma in situ

A benign tumor that consists of abnormal cells in the lining of a lobule.

Lobules

The smaller sub-section of the breast where milk is made.

Lumpectomy

The surgical removal of a small tumor (a lump) which may or may not be benign (or malignant) from the breast.

Lymphedema

An accumulation of lymph fluid in the arm, hand or breast that may develop when lymphatic vessels or nodes have been removed or blocked by surgery, or after radiation therapy. It can appear immediately after treatment or many years later.

Mammogram

An x-ray test used to form an image of the internal breast tissue in order to detect or monitor any abnormalities.

Mastectomy

The surgical removal of all or part of a breast usually performed as a treatment for cancer.

Microsurgery

Surgery that is performed through a microscope.

One-Stage Reconstruction

When the breast is reconstructed using the direct to implant technique, without the use of a tissue expander.

Partial muscle coverage

One technique option when reconstructed with an implant, in which the top part of the implant is covered with the pectoralis chest muscle, leaving the lower portion of the implant unsupported.

Pectoralis Major Muscle

Muscle that is located on the upper chest wall.

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Glossary (continued)

Pedicle Flap

One type of TRAM Flap reconstruction in which the flap of tissue is attached to its original blood supply and the blood vessels are tunneled under the skin to the breast region.

Porcine

Derived from pig.

Precancerous

An abnormal cell that appears to be on its way to becoming cancerous; premalignant.

Prophylactic

A preventative measure.

Ptosis

How the breast hangs.

Radiation therapy

A localized treatment of high-energy rays used to damage cancer cells in order to stop them from growing and dividing, with the end goal of stopping the spread of cancer.

Rectus abdominal muscle

Commonly referred to as the 'abs', this paired muscle extends along the length of the front of the abdomen.

Recurrence

The return of cancer. Recurrence may be found in the original site or somewhere else in the body.

Scar tissue

Tissue that forms in your body as part of the natural healing process but is typically less functional and not identical to the original tissue.

Serratus anterior muscles

Muscles that originate on the upper sides of the chest, that connect to and help stabilize and rotate the shoulder blade.

Surgical drain

A tube used to aid in the removal of fluids from a surgical site post-operation.

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Glossary (continued)

Symmastia

Implants have moved so that they are too close together or touching in the center of the chest.

Tissue expander

A device that is similar to a balloon, which is placed beneath the skin and chest muscle. Using a tiny valve beneath the skin, the surgeon injects a salt-water solution at regular intervals to fill the expander over time (this can take up to several weeks) in order to stretch the skin and muscle over the breast.

Tissue matrix

A medical product derived from animal or human tissue. Rigorous processing strips away the cells, leaving only a structure which can then be implanted into the body in order to support the body's own healing process.

TRAM (Transverse Rectus Abdominis Muscle) Flap

In a TRAM Flap reconstruction, tissue is taken from the lower abdomen (abdominal wall) and moved into the chest. There are two types of TRAM Flap reconstructions: Pedicle Flap and Free Flap.

Two-Stage Reconstruction

When there is not enough tissue left after mastectomy to insert the implant directly beneath the skin and muscle, the reconstruction is completed in two stages. The breast pocket is first stretched with an expander and after desired expansion is achieved, an implant is put in place (up to several weeks later).

Vascular disease

A disease that affects the body's circulatory system, including the body's arteries, veins, lymph vessels and blood.

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