

Questions to ask your plastic surgeon

It is very important that you get all of your questions answered by your plastic surgeon before having breast reconstruction. If you don't understand something, ask your surgeon about it. Here is a list of questions to get you started. Write down other questions as you think of them.

You may want to take notes or record your talks with your surgeons. Some people bring their partner or a friend with them to the doctor to help remember what was said and to help ask other questions. The answers to these questions may help you make your decisions.

Can I have breast reconstruction?

When can I have reconstruction done?

What types of reconstruction could I have?

What is the average cost of each type? Will my insurance cover them?

What type of reconstruction do you think would be best for me? Why?

What results can I expect?

Will the reconstructed breast match my other breast?

How will my reconstructed breast feel to the touch?

Will I have any feeling in my reconstructed breast?

What possible problems should I know about?

Will there be pain, scars, or other changes in parts of my body from which tissue is taken (if using a tissue flap)?

How much discomfort or pain will I feel?

How long will I be in the hospital?

Will I need blood transfusions?

How long will it take for me to recover?

What will I need to do at home to care for my incisions (surgical wounds)?

Will I have a drain (tube that lets fluid out) when I go home?

How much help will I need at home to take care of my drain and wound?

When can I start my exercises?

How much activity can I do at home?

What do I do if my arm swells (this is called lymphoedema)?

When will I be able to go back to normal activity such as driving and working?

Can I talk with other women who have had the same surgery?

Will reconstruction interfere with chemotherapy?

Will reconstruction interfere with radiation therapy?

How long will the implant last?

What kinds of changes to the breast can I expect over time?

How will aging affect the reconstructed breast?

What happens if I gain or lose weight?