

Breast cancer: surgical options

Use this **Option Grid™** decision aid to help you and your healthcare professional talk about how to best treat your breast cancer. This decision aid is for women with early stage breast cancer (stages I to IIIA).

Frequently asked questions	Lumpectomy with radiation	Mastectomy
What is removed?	The cancer lump is removed, with some surrounding tissue.	The whole breast is removed.
Which surgery is best for long-term survival?	Long-term survival rates are the same for both surgeries.	Long-term survival rates are the same for both surgeries.
What are the chances of cancer coming back in the breast?	Breast cancer will come back in the breast in about 5 to 10 in 100 women (5-10%) in the 10 years after a lumpectomy.	Breast cancer will come back in the area of the scar in about 5 to 10 in 100 women (5-10%) in the 10 years after a mastectomy.
Will I need more than one surgery?	Possibly, 20 in 100 women (20%) may need another surgery to remove breast tissue or lymph node that have cancer.	Possibly, if your lymph nodes have cancer. Yes, if you choose breast reconstruction.
How long will it take to recover?	Most women are home within 24 hours of surgery.	Most women are home within 24 hours of surgery. It may take longer with reconstruction.
Will I need radiation after surgery?	Yes, for up to seven weeks after surgery.	Radiation is not usually given after mastectomy.
Will my lymph nodes be removed?	If cancer has spread to the lymph nodes under your arm, your doctor will discuss with you whether you need more treatment such as surgery or radiotherapy.	If cancer has spread to the lymph nodes under your arm, your doctor will discuss with you whether you need more treatment such as surgery or radiotherapy.
Will I need chemotherapy?	You may be offered chemotherapy, but this does not depend on the surgery you choose.	You may be offered chemotherapy, but this does not depend on the surgery you choose.
Will I lose my hair?	Hair loss is common after chemotherapy.	Hair loss is common after chemotherapy.