

Breast Surgery – Excision

Introduction

There are 2 main types of breast cancer surgery:

- breast-conserving surgery, where the cancerous lump (tumour) is removed
- mastectomy, where the whole breast is removed

In many cases, a mastectomy can be followed by reconstructive surgery to try to recreate a breast.

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital.

Guidance for Patients

Breast-conserving surgery

Breast-conserving surgery ranges from a lumpectomy or wide local excision, where the tumour and a little surrounding breast tissue is removed, to a partial mastectomy or quadrantectomy, where up to a quarter of the breast is removed.

If you have breast-conserving surgery, the amount of breast tissue that is removed will depend on:

- the type of cancer you have
- the size of the tumour and where it is in your breast
- the amount of surrounding tissue that needs to be removed
- the size of your breasts

Your surgeon will always remove an area of healthy breast tissue around the tumour, which will be tested for traces of cancer.

If there's no cancer present in the healthy tissue, there's less chance that the cancer will return.

If cancer cells are found in the surrounding tissue, more tissue may need to be removed from your breast.

After having breast-conserving surgery, you'll usually be offered radiotherapy to destroy any remaining cancer cells.

Mastectomy

A mastectomy is the removal of all the breast tissue, including the nipple.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

If there are no obvious signs that the cancer has spread to your lymph nodes, you may have a mastectomy, where your breast is removed, along with a sentinel lymph node biopsy.

If the cancer has spread to your lymph nodes, you'll probably need more extensive removal (clearance) of lymph nodes from the area under your arm (axilla).

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening –severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains –please dial 999.

GP surgeries are still open

GP practice staff are also helping patients to manage their conditions at home while they wait for hospital appointments. GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic and GP practices continue to make best use of telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it. When you phone or use an online form to contact your GP surgery to make an appointment, you will be asked some questions which are designed to help staff guide you to the most appropriate clinical person to help you with your condition. This could be a nurse, clinical pharmacist, physician's associate, GP or paramedic.

Contact Us

01902 307 999