

Considering prophylactic mastectomy

Resources to help you decide if preventive surgery is right for you

If you're at high risk for breast cancer, you have several care options to consider. Removing both your breasts can significantly reduce your risk of developing cancer. It's a deeply personal decision that will have a lasting effect on your life. Your team at the Hereditary Cancer Program is here to support you.

Make an informed decision

You have time to choose a treatment plan that's right for you. Your care team can answer your questions. These resources can also help:

- **Preparing for your mastectomy**

Watch this 35-minute video to learn what to expect before, during, and after a mastectomy. You'll need to sign in with your Kaiser Permanente medical record number.

kpdoc.org/mastectomyemmi

- **Breast reconstruction decision-making tool**

Reconstruction is a choice, and there's no time limit on when you have to decide. Use this tool to compare your options and explore your feelings.

kp.org/breastreconstruction

- **Your guide to breast reconstruction**

This website includes videos, before-and-after photos, and a downloadable guide.

kpactionplans.org/breastrecon

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Prophylactic mastectomy *(continued)*

Is preventive surgery right for you?

What to consider before choosing prophylactic mastectomy

Mastectomy

There are different types of prophylactic mastectomies. The best one for you depends on your individual circumstances, especially if you've been diagnosed with cancer in one breast. A breast surgeon can explain the benefits, potential risks, and complications of a mastectomy – with and without reconstruction.

There's a small risk of cancer after a mastectomy because even the most experienced surgeon can't remove all the breast tissue. While you most likely won't need mammograms or breast MRIs, it's important to continue doing self-examinations.

Reconstruction

You can get breast reconstruction at the same time as a mastectomy or years after. However, if you need radiation therapy for cancer, your options may be limited.

After your breast is removed, a plastic surgeon rebuilds the size and shape of your breast using an artificial implant or tissue from your own body.

A reconstructed breast won't feel or function like a natural breast. It will give you a breast shape that looks close to a natural breast in your bra and clothes. A plastic surgeon can explain the types of reconstruction, benefits, and potential risks.

Recovery time

Recovery after surgery is an important consideration when deciding if a prophylactic mastectomy, with or without reconstruction, is right for you. Most women can go home the day of their surgery. If you have reconstruction using your own body tissue, you could have a longer hospital stay.

When you get home, it can take a few weeks to recover from a mastectomy. It could take longer if you had reconstruction. It's important to rest and have help around the house during your recovery.

Find support

**Facing Our Risk of Cancer
Empowered (FORCE)**
1-866-288-RISK (7475)
facingourrisk.org

**Patient Advocate
Foundation**
1-800-532-5274
patientadvocate.org

American Cancer Society
1-800-227-2345
cancer.org

CancerCare
1-800-813-HOPE (4673)
cancercares.org