



Step 4

Compare your choices

	Breast-Sparing Surgery
Is this surgery right for me?	Breast-sparing surgery with radiation is a safe choice for most women who have early-stage breast cancer. This means that your cancer is DCIS or at Stage I, IIA, IIB, or IIIA.
What are the names of the different kinds of surgery?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lumpectomy• Partial mastectomy• Breast-sparing surgery• Segmental mastectomy
What doctors am I likely to see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oncologist• Surgeon• Radiation oncologist
What will my breast look like after surgery?	Your breast should look a lot like it did before surgery. But if your tumor is large, your breast may look different or smaller after breast-sparing surgery.

Mastectomy Surgery	Mastectomy and Breast Reconstruction Surgery
<p>Mastectomy is a safe choice for women who have early-stage breast cancer (DCIS, Stage I, IIA, IIB, or IIIA).</p> <p>You may need a mastectomy if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have small breasts and a large tumor • You have cancer in more than one part of your breast • The tumor is under the nipple • You do not have access to radiation therapy. 	<p>If you have a mastectomy, you might also want breast reconstruction surgery. You can choose to have reconstruction surgery at the same time as your mastectomy or wait and have it at a later date.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total mastectomy • Modified radical mastectomy • Double mastectomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast implant • Tissue flap surgery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oncologist • Surgeon • Radiation oncologist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oncologist • Surgeon • Radiation oncologist • Reconstructive plastic surgeon
<p>Your breast and nipple will be removed. You will have a flat chest on the side of your body where the breast was removed.</p>	<p>Although you will have a breast-like shape, your breast will not look the same as it did before surgery.</p>

Step 4. Compare your choices *continued*

	Breast-Sparing Surgery
Will I have feeling in the area around my breast?	Yes. You should still have feeling in your breast, nipple, and areola (the dark area around your nipple).
Will I have pain after the surgery?	You may have pain after surgery. Talk with your surgeon or nurse about ways to control this pain. To find out ways to learn more about pain control, see “Resources to Learn More” on page 17.
What other problems can I expect?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You may feel very tired after radiation therapy.• You may get lymphedema—a problem in which your arm swells. To find out more about lymphedema, see the “About Lymph Nodes” box on page 4 and “Resources to Learn More” on page 17.

Mastectomy Surgery	Mastectomy and Breast Reconstruction Surgery
<p>Maybe. After surgery, you will feel numb (have no feeling) in your chest wall and maybe also under your arm.</p> <p>This numb feeling should go away in 1 to 2 years, but it will never feel like it used to. Also, the skin where your breast was may feel tight.</p>	<p>No. The area around your breast will always be numb (have no feeling).</p>
<p>You may have pain after surgery. Talk with your surgeon or nurse about ways to control this pain.</p> <p>To find out ways to learn more about pain control, see “Resources to Learn More” on page 17.</p>	<p>You are likely to have pain after major surgery such as mastectomy and reconstruction surgery.</p> <p>There are many ways to deal with pain. Let your surgeon or nurse know if you need relief from pain. To find out ways to learn more about pain control, see “Resources to Learn More” on page 17.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may have pain in your neck or back. • You may feel out of balance if you had large breasts and do not have reconstruction surgery. • You may get lymphedema—a problem in which your arm swells. To find out more about lymphedema, see the “About Lymph Nodes” box on page 4 and “Resources to Learn More” on page 17. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may take you many weeks or even months to recover from breast reconstruction surgery. • If you have an implant, you may get infections, pain, or hardness. Also, you may not like how your breast-like shape looks. You may need more surgery if your implant breaks or leaks. • If you have tissue flap surgery, you may lose strength in the part of your body where the flap came from. • You may get lymphedema—a problem in which your arm swells. To find out more about lymphedema, see the “About Lymph Nodes” box on page 4 and “Resources to Learn More” on page 17.

Step 4. Compare your choices *continued*

	Breast-Sparing Surgery
Will I need more surgery?	Maybe. You may need more surgery to remove lymph nodes from under your arm. Also, if the surgeon does not remove all your cancer the first time, you may need more surgery.
What other types of treatment will I need?	You will need radiation therapy, given almost every day for 5 to 8 weeks. You also may need chemotherapy, hormone therapy, or both.
Will insurance pay for my surgery?	Check with your insurance company to find out how much it pays for breast cancer surgery and other needed treatments.
Will the type of surgery I have affect how long I live?	Women with early-stage breast cancer who have breast-sparing surgery followed by radiation live just as long as women who have a mastectomy. Most women with breast cancer will lead long, healthy lives after treatment.
What are the chances that my cancer will come back after surgery?	About 10% (1 out of every 10) of women who have breast-sparing surgery along with radiation therapy get cancer in the same breast within 12 years. If this happens, you will need a mastectomy, but it will not affect how long you live.
Where can I learn more about coping with life after cancer?	

Mastectomy Surgery	Mastectomy and Breast Reconstruction Surgery
<p>Maybe. You may need surgery to remove lymph nodes from under your arm. Also, if you have problems after your mastectomy, you may need to see your surgeon for treatment.</p>	<p>Yes. You will need surgery at least 2 more times to build a new breast-like shape. With implants, you may need more surgery months or years later. You may also need surgery to remove lymph nodes from under your arm.</p>
<p>You also may need chemotherapy, hormone therapy, or radiation therapy. Some women get all three types of therapy.</p>	<p>You may need chemotherapy, hormone therapy, or radiation therapy. Some women get all three types of therapy.</p>
<p>Check with your insurance company to find out how much it pays for breast cancer surgery and other needed treatments.</p>	<p>Check with your insurance company to find out if it pays for breast reconstruction surgery. You should also ask if your insurance will pay for problems that may result from breast reconstruction surgery.</p>
<p>Women with early-stage breast cancer who have a mastectomy live the same amount of time as women who have breast-sparing surgery followed by radiation therapy. Most women with breast cancer will lead long, healthy lives after treatment.</p>	<p>Women with early-stage breast cancer who have a mastectomy live the same amount of time as women who have breast-sparing surgery followed by radiation therapy. Most women with breast cancer will lead long, healthy lives after treatment.</p>
<p>About 5% (1 out of every 20) of women who have a mastectomy will get cancer on the same side of their chest within 12 years.</p>	<p>About 5% (1 out of every 20) of women who have a mastectomy will get cancer on the same side of their chest within 12 years. Breast reconstruction surgery does not affect the chances of your cancer coming back.</p>
<p>To learn more about life after cancer, you might want to read <i>Facing Forward: Life After Cancer Treatment</i>. You can get this booklet at www.cancer.gov/publications or 1-800-4-CANCER.</p>	