

YOUR BREAST RECONSTRUCTION CONSULTANTS

All the options overleaf will be explained thoroughly by your Consultant, and the advantages and disadvantages discussed fully before proceeding.



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HOW TO FIND US:

London Bridge Hospital is situated on the South Bank of the Thames. We are next to London Bridge mainline and underground stations with easy access to the City. Please note: no right hand turn from Borough High Street into Duke Street Hill.



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BREAST RECONSTRUCTION



Breast reconstruction is the process of recreating a breast mound aiming to match the remaining natural breast after having a mastectomy. It has been shown to improve mental health, emotional wellbeing, energy levels and satisfaction with breast appearance after a mastectomy.

Everybody is different, with specific medical needs and individual preferences. It is therefore important to carefully discuss which type of reconstruction operation is most suitable for you and to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each.

WHAT IS BREAST RECONSTRUCTION?

Breast reconstruction is surgery to make a new breast shape after a mastectomy (removal of a breast), or to improve the breast shape after a lumpectomy (removal of part of the breast). The intention of breast reconstruction is to match the remaining natural breast as closely as possible.

Nipple reconstruction is also an option; this tends to be a separate operation once the reconstruction has happened and the new breast has settled into its final shape. However, it is also possible for this to be done at the same time as the breast reconstruction; this can be discussed with your Consultant.

Before proceeding with breast reconstruction surgery, your Consultant will thoroughly discuss the options most suited to your body and tissue type, health, age and objectives. Your Consultant will openly discuss the possible breast reconstruction risks and complications associated with the particular procedure you will undergo.

You will be given written information to take home in order to contemplate your options. At your second consultation, all of your queries will be answered and a definite plan regarding the breast reconstruction is set.

It may take time to adjust emotionally to having a reconstructed breast and it may help to talk with other women who have had the procedure or to one of our specialist breast care nurses.

TIMING OF BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

One of the first choices you will have is whether to undergo immediate or delayed reconstruction. Immediate reconstruction is performed during the same operation as the mastectomy.

In cases where the decision for reconstruction could not be made or it was not offered at the time of a mastectomy, a delayed reconstruction can be performed. In this type of breast reconstruction, entire breast skin, as well as the breast volume, needs to be restored.

TYPES OF BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

There are two main types of breast reconstruction operation – one by using an implant, or another by using skin, fat and sometimes muscle from another part of your body (abdomen, buttocks or inner thigh) to create a breast shape, known as autologous reconstruction. A combination of these techniques can be used for some women.

• Implant reconstruction

The simplest option for reconstruction is to have implants alone, where an implant is placed under the skin and muscle covering your chest. This option is best for patients who do not want additional scars and a complex surgery. It is usually completed in two stages.

• Autologous reconstruction

These procedures take longer as they require microsurgical transfer of tissue from one area of the body to another and reconnection of blood vessels. There are several procedures of this kind, using excess skin and fat from different body areas depending on suitability.

• Latissimus Dorsi Flap

If autologous reconstructions are not recommended, a simpler procedure can be performed using muscle and skin from the back area, just underneath the shoulder blade. This is an option that may be used for reconstruction with or without an implant.

