

If you are having a total mastectomy.

Here are some questions to ask your surgeon as you plan for a total mastectomy:

- How many times have you performed mastectomy?
- What are the risks of mastectomy?
- How should I prepare for surgery?
- How long will surgery take?
- Will you remove any lymph nodes under my arm along with the breast tissue?
- What kind of anesthesia will I have?
- Will I need blood transfusions? Should I donate my own blood before surgery?
- Am I a candidate for immediate breast reconstruction? If so, may I be referred to a plastic reconstructive surgeon?
- If I am not a candidate for immediate breast reconstruction, would I be a candidate for delayed breast reconstruction? If so, when would I be referred to the plastic reconstructive surgeon?
- If I choose not to have immediate reconstruction, how will my chest look after surgery?
- Will I be at risk for lymphedema after surgery?
- How much pain should I expect afterwards?
- When will I be able to shower?
- How long will I stay in the hospital?
- Will I have any drains afterwards? If so, how many drains will I have? How long will the drains stay in?
- How long will it take to recover?
- Are there any precautions I should take as I recover?
Will you give me written instructions to follow?
- Are there exercises I need to do after surgery?
- When can I return to my normal routine and activities? When will I be able to drive?
- When will I be able to return to work?

