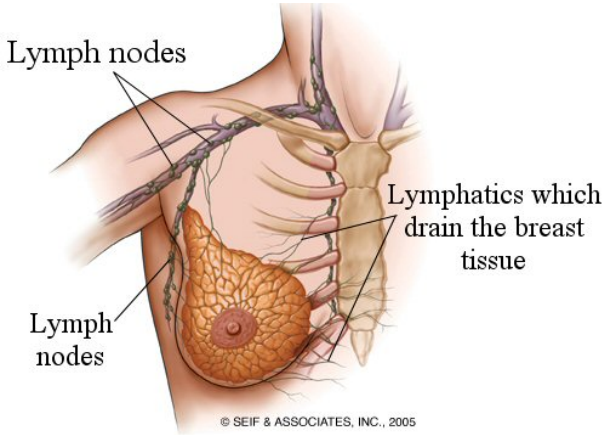
Lumpectomy, Breast Conserving Surgery

A lumpectomy is breast surgery that removes only part of the breast. Another name used may be partial mastectomy. The amount removed varies. Make sure you understand how much of your breast will be removed.

Reasons for a lumpectomy:

- Any solid breast mass.
- Grouped significant nodularity that may be confused with a solitary breast mass.



Lumpectomy is the most common form of breast cancer surgery today. The surgeon removes the portion of your breast which contains the tumor (cancer). This is the lump. Some normal tissue around the lump is also removed to be sure that all the tumor has been removed.

If cancer cells are found in the margins where the breast tissue was removed, your surgeon will do more surgery to remove the remaining cancer tissue. This is called re-excision surgery. Radiation and/or chemotherapy treatments are often given following a lumpectomy to kill any cancer cells that could possibly remain.

SOME REASONS YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO HAVE BREAST CONSERVING SURGERY

- The tumor is located in more than one place.
- Your breast is small and the tumor is large so the breast would be disfigured.
- The entire tumor removal is not successful with a lumpectomy.
- You cannot commit to a full course of chemotherapy, radiation therapy or are pregnant and cannot have radiation.
- You have previously had radiation to the breast to treat cancer.

HOW A LUMPECTOMY IS PERFORMED

If overnight nursing is not required following a biopsy, a lumpectomy can be performed as a same-day surgery. This can be done in a hospital, clinic, or surgical center. The anesthesia used will depend on your surgeon. They will discuss this with you. A general anesthetic keeps you sleeping through the procedure.

BEFORE SURGERY

You should be present one hour prior to your procedure unless directed otherwise. Check in at the admissions desk to fill out necessary forms if not pre-registered. There will be consent forms to sign prior to the procedure. There is a waiting area for your family while you are having your biopsy.

LET YOUR CAREGIVERS KNOW ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:

- Allergies
- Medications taken including herbs, eye drops, over the counter medications, and creams.
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams)
- Previous problems with anesthetics or Novocaine.
- Possibility of pregnancy, if this applies
- History of blood clots (thrombophlebitis)
- History of bleeding or blood problems.
- Previous surgery
- Other health problems

AFTER YOUR SURGERY

- After surgery, you will be taken to the recovery area where a nurse will watch and check your progress. Once you're awake, stable, and taking fluids well, barring other problems you will be allowed to go home.

- Ice packs applied to your operative site may help with discomfort and keep the swelling down.
- A small rubber drain may be placed in the breast for a couple of days to prevent a hematoma from developing in the breast.
- A pressure dressing may be applied for 24 to 48 hours to prevent bleeding.
- Keep the wound dry.
- You may resume a normal diet and activities as directed. Avoid strenuous activities affecting the arm on the side of the biopsy site such as tennis, swimming, heavy lifting (more than 10 pounds) or pulling.
- Bruising in the breast is normal following this procedure.
- Wearing a bra - even to bed - may be more comfortable and also help keep the dressing on.
- Change dressings as directed.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

Call for your results as instructed by your surgeon. Remember **it is your responsibility** to get the results of your lumpectomy if your surgeon asked you to follow-up. *Do not assume everything is fine if you have not heard from your caregiver.*

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is increased bleeding (more than a small spot) from the wound.
- You notice redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- Pus is coming from wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C) develops.
- You notice a foul smell coming from the wound or dressing.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a rash.
- You have difficulty breathing.
- You have any allergic problems.

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