

Question checklist for breast prostheses and reconstruction

Asking your doctor questions will help you make an informed choice. You may want to include some of the questions below in your own list.

Breast prostheses

Questions to ask the breast care nurse or fitter

- Do I need to wear a breast prosthesis?
- What kind of prosthesis would work best for me? Is there something suitable after breast-conserving surgery?
- When can I start wearing a breast prosthesis?
- How will wearing a prosthesis affect me if I have lymphoedema or oedema?
- What can I do if I find the breast prosthesis uncomfortable?
- Do I need to buy pocketed bras or can I wear regular ones?

Questions to ask the fitter about the fitting

- How long will the fitting take?
- Can I bring a support person to the fitting?
- If I don't want to remove my bra, is it possible to be measured for a prosthesis and/or pocketed bra without doing so?
- Do you have a wide range of styles and colours? Can you order other styles or colours if the ones in stock aren't suitable?
- What if I find the prosthesis too heavy or too hot?
- Can I also get a swim breast prosthesis? Will I need a special swimming costume?
- What is the price range of the prostheses and bras you sell?
- Do I need to buy a pocketed bra or can I use a regular one?
- How do I care for the prosthesis?
- Can I return the prosthesis if it's not suitable?
- What happens if I puncture my prosthesis?
- What is the warranty period for the prosthesis?
- How long will my prosthesis last?
- What should I do if my breast size changes before I'm due for a replacement?

Questions to ask yourself about the fit

- Is the bra comfortable when I take a deep breath?
- When I lean forward, is the bra sitting flat against my chest?
- Does the prosthesis feel secure in the bra?
- Does the prosthesis match my skin tone?
- Do I feel balanced? Does the surface of the bra look smooth?
- Can I see edges of the prosthesis sticking out of the bra?
- Do I like how I look with the prosthesis in place?



Breast reconstruction

Questions to ask your breast or reconstructive (plastic) surgeon

- Do you think I can have a reconstruction?
- When would you advise me to have the reconstruction?
- What types of reconstructions are suitable for me?
- If I need radiation therapy, will this affect the reconstruction or the type of reconstruction I can have?
- Will you do my reconstruction?
- What are the risks and possible side effects of this type of reconstruction?
- Do you specialise in this type of surgery?
- How long will I have to wait to have the reconstruction?
- Where can I have this surgery?
- How long will I need to stay in hospital? How long will my recovery take?
- How much will it cost? Are there any out-of-pocket expenses not covered by Medicare or my private health cover?
- How will the reconstructed breast look and feel?
- · Can you show me photos of previous reconstructions you've done?
- Can I talk to others who have had a similar operation?
- Will the reconstruction hide any new problems? Do I still need regular mammograms?
- How can I get a second opinion?
- Who should I contact if I have questions or a problem after surgery?
- If there are complications, is it likely I'll need more surgery?

My questions