

Breast Lumpectomy

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

What do I need to know about a lumpectomy? A lumpectomy is surgery to remove a mass in your breast. Breast tissue that surrounds the mass may also be taken. A lumpectomy is also known as breast-conserving surgery, a partial mastectomy, or a segmental mastectomy.

How do I prepare for a lumpectomy?

- You may need a mammogram or ultrasound before surgery. These tests may be done the same day as your surgery or at an earlier time. Your healthcare provider may use pictures from these tests to mark the location of the mass. The marker will show him where to make your incision.
- Your healthcare provider will talk to you about how to prepare for surgery. He may tell you not to eat or drink anything after midnight on the day of your surgery. He will tell you what medicines to take or not take on the day of your surgery. You may need to stop taking blood thinners or aspirin several days before your surgery. Arrange for someone to drive you home and stay with you for 24 hours after surgery. This person can help care for you, and monitor for any problems.

What will happen during a lumpectomy? You will be given general anesthesia to keep you asleep and free from pain during surgery. You may be given an antibiotic through your IV to help prevent a bacterial infection. Your healthcare provider will make an incision in your breast and remove the mass. He may also remove breast tissue or lymph nodes that are close to the mass. A drain may be inserted near your incision to remove extra fluid. This will decrease swelling and help your incision heal. Your healthcare provider will close your incision with stitches or strips of medical tape and cover it with a bandage. He may also wrap a tight-fitting bandage around both of your breasts. This may decrease swelling, bleeding, and pain.

What will happen after a lumpectomy? Healthcare providers will monitor you until you are awake. You may be able to go home when you are awake and your pain is controlled. Instead you may need to spend the night in the hospital.

What are the risks of a lumpectomy? You may bleed more than expected or get an infection. Nerves, blood vessels, and muscles may be damaged during your surgery. You may have swelling in your arm closest to the lumpectomy or where lymph nodes were removed. This swelling is called lymphedema. Lymphedema may cause tingling, numbness, stiffness, and weakness in your arm. This may be permanent. You may get a blood clot in your arm or leg. The blood clot may travel to your heart lungs, or brain. This may become life-threatening.

CARE AGREEMENT:

You have the right to help plan your care. Learn about your health condition and how it may be treated. Discuss treatment options with your healthcare providers to decide what care you want to receive. You always have the right to refuse treatment. The above information is an educational aid only. It is not intended as medical advice for individual conditions or treatments. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist before following any medical regimen to see if it is safe and effective for you.

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