Breast Reconstruction:
What Every Patient Needs to Know

Autologous Reconstruction:
Using Your Own Tissue
Goals of Care

• Restore shape and function after cancer

• Aid in physiological and psychological benefit
  – Relationship with significant other
  – Self esteem and positive body image
  – Feeling of a “whole body”
  – Avoid having to wear prosthesis
Timing for Breast Reconstruction

**Immediate**

**Pros**
- Better cosmetic results
- Less scarring
- Less surgery

**Cons**
- May delay cancer treatment
- Cosmetic result compromised by radiation

**Delayed**

**Pros**
- Cancer treatment first

**Cons**
- Mastectomy scars
- Additional surgery
- Wait time for reconstruction
Reconstruction 3-6 months

Your Own Tissue
Radiation and Reconstructive Surgery

- Different timing and approach
- Immediate reconstruction may not be possible
- Radiation affects blood supply to normal skin
- Higher risk of complications
  - Delayed wound healing
  - Fat necrosis
  - Capsular contracture
Abdominal Flap/Tummy Tuck Flap

- pedicle TRAM
- free TRAM
- MS-TRAM
- DIEP
- SIEA

Sacrifices muscle

Spares muscle
Autologous Tissue - Abdomen

**Advantage**
- Natural own tissue
- No implant complications
- Natural look/feel
- Opportunity for aesthetic improvement (tummy tuck)

**Disadvantage**
- Longer procedure
  - 6 hours/side
- Longer hospital stay
  - 4-5 days
- Longer recovery
  - 6-8 weeks
- Risk of abdominal hernia
- Risk of damaged blood flow

**Contraindications:**
- Not enough fat tissue
- Prior liposuction
- Prior surgeries/scars
Alternative sites for reconstruction with your own tissue

Buttock
- Skin and fat tissue
- No muscle taken
- Buttock lift

Thigh
Complications of autologous transplants

- Blood clots 3%
- Flap failure 1%
- Partial flap loss 1%
- Abdominal wall weakness 3%
- Hernia 1%
- Bulge 1%
- May require synthetic mesh to reinforce muscle 5%
- Fluid collection (seroma) 2%
- Blood Collection (hematoma) 1%
- Infection 1%
Autologous Breast Reconstruction

Mastectomy

Flap

Revision(s)

Nipple Reconstruction

Immediate

3 mos

OR

Clinic

Delayed

3 mos

OR
Nipple Reconstruction

- Patient’s preference
- Nipple is reconstructed after the breast is healed (3-4 months after reconstruction surgery)
  - Use local tissue (projected nipple) + tattoo
  - Three dimensional tattoo (flat nipple)
Risks and Complications of ANY Surgery

• Bleeding
• Infection
• Scars
• Pain
• Loss of sensation
• Asymmetry

• Blood Clots
• Respiratory problems
• Problems with ambulation
• Delayed wound healing
• Need for more surgery
Summary

• Own tissue transplant
  – Bigger surgery, longer recovery
  – Highly technical
  – Greatest longevity