Breast Reconstruction: What Every Patient Needs to Know

Implant-Based Reconstruction
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate</th>
<th>Delayed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cons</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Better cosmetic results</td>
<td>• May delay cancer treatment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Less scarring</td>
<td>• Cosmetic result compromised by radiation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Less surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cons</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cancer treatment first</td>
<td>• Mastectomy scars</td>
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<td>• Additional surgery</td>
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<td>• Wait time for reconstruction</td>
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Implant-Based Reconstruction

**Advantage**
- Quick procedural time
- Shorter recovery time
- Variable size
- One operative site (breast)

**Disadvantage**
- Limited implant lifespan
- Multiple procedures
- Revisions necessary
- Visible/palpable implant
- Risk for potential infection
- Risk of capsule contracture
Two Step Process

**Step 1**
Placement of Tissue Expander
- 1 hour/side
- 1 overnight stay

**Step 2**
Exchange of Tissue Expander for Implant
- 1 hour/side
- Outpatient procedure
Tissue Expander Reconstruction

- Clinic visit 1-2 weeks for gradual fills with fluid
- In 3mo (or 6mo with radiation) replaced with implant
Implant-Based Breast Reconstruction

Mastectomy + Tissue Expander Insertion

Expansion

Implant Exchange

Nipple Reconstruction

OR

~1 mo

Clinic

3-6 mos

OR

3 mos

Clinic
Potential complications with Implants

• Rupture/Deflation
• Displacement
• Infection
• Capsular contracture
• Difficulty with mammograms
• Need for revisional surgery
• Visible rippling
• Unnatural feeling
• Asymmetry
• Pain
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
Implant-Based Reconstruction

**Advantage**
- Quick procedural time
- Short recovery time (4-6 weeks)
- Variable size
- Control over size
- One operative site (breast)
- Good symmetry
- Good symmetry

**Disadvantage**
- Limited implant life span
- Multiple procedures to result
- Possible revisions
- Visible/palpable implant
- Risk for potential infection
- Risk of capsule contracture

10-12 months
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 (projected nipple)
  – 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

• Tissue Expander/Implant
  – Less surgery, faster recovery
  – Implants are mechanical devices
  – Less “natural”