

Treating Breast Cancer with Surgery

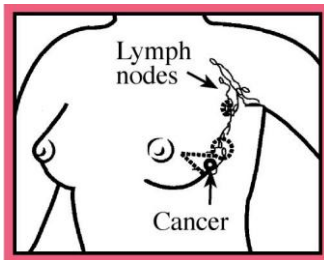
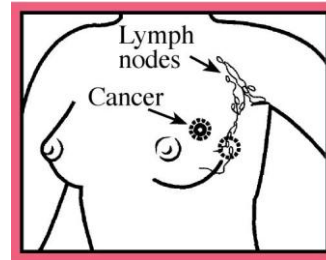
Breast cancer can be treated in different ways. One form of treatment is surgery.

There are different kinds of surgery for breast cancer. The kind of surgery you have depends on the size of the cancer and where it is in the breast.

Here are some words your doctor may use to talk about surgery

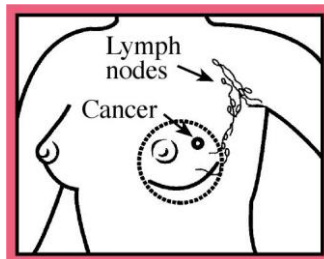
- **Lymph nodes** are small glands shaped like beans. They are in many parts of the body. If there are cancer cells in the lymph nodes under the arm, it means the cancer has spread.
- **Surgery that saves the breast**

Lumpectomy removes the cancer and some normal area around it. The doctor may take out some lymph nodes.



Segmental mastectomy or partial mastectomy removes the cancer and a large normal area around it. The doctor may take out some lymph nodes.

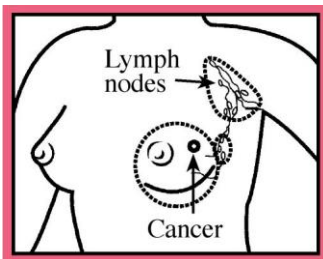
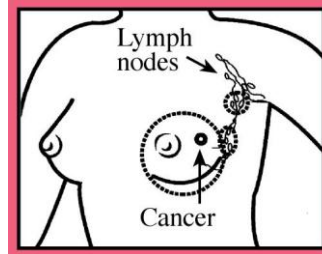
- **Radiation after surgery:** Many women have radiation treatments after surgery that saves the breast. Radiation helps to kill any cancer cells that are left.
- **Surgery that removes the breast**



Total mastectomy removes the whole breast. The doctor may take out some lymph nodes.

Modified radical mastectomy

removes the breast and most lymph nodes under the arm. The doctor may also take out the lining over the chest muscles and one of the two chest muscles.



Radical mastectomy removes the breast, both chest muscles, extra fat and skin, and all the lymph nodes under the arm. It is not used very often.

Questions to ask your doctor about surgery for breast cancer.

- What kinds of surgery can I choose from?
- Can my breast be saved?
- Which surgery do you think is best for me?
- Can this surgery harm me?
- Will you take out my lymph nodes?
- What will I need to do to take care of myself after surgery?
- How will my breast look after surgery?
- When will I be able to go back to doing the things I usually do?
- Will I need more treatment after surgery?

Talking to your doctor about treatment

Writing down your questions before you talk to the doctor can help you remember them. It may also help to bring a family member or friend with you.

How can I find out more about treatment for breast cancer?

- Call the West Virginia Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program (WVBCCSP) at 1-800-642-8522. The call is free.
- or**
- Call the Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237). The call is free.