

Treatment Options for Early-Stage Breast Cancer

This decision aid is for people with early-stage breast cancer who are considering lumpectomy with radiation or mastectomy. It is not for people with inflammatory or late-stage breast cancer. Another decision aid is available for breast reconstruction after mastectomy.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	
What does the option involve?	
Lumpectomy With Radiation	<p>You will have surgery to remove the cancer and some tissue around it. You may need another surgery if signs of cancer are on the edges of the removed tissue. You may go home the same day.</p> <p>After you heal, you will get radiation. How often and how much radiation you will need can vary.</p>
Mastectomy	<p>You will have surgery to remove the whole breast. You may go home the same day or stay in the hospital for a day or more. Tubes will be left under the skin for up to 2 weeks to help you heal.</p>
What about these treatment options is the same?	
Lumpectomy With Radiation	<p>No matter which treatment you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may need other treatments like radiation, hormone therapy, or chemotherapy. Some lymph nodes in your armpit may be removed for testing.
Mastectomy	<p>No matter which treatment you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may need other treatments like radiation, hormone therapy, or chemotherapy. Some lymph nodes in your armpit may be removed for testing.
How long will I live?	
Lumpectomy With Radiation	<p>You will live for the same amount of time with each option. But how long you live depends on many things, like age and cancer type.</p> <p>Talk with your healthcare professional for a personal estimate of how long you will live.</p>
Mastectomy	<p>You will live for the same amount of time with each option. But how long you live depends on many things, like age and cancer type.</p> <p>Talk with your healthcare professional for a personal estimate of how long you will live.</p>

Will cancer come back?	
Lumpectomy With Radiation	The chance of your cancer coming back anywhere is the same for each option.
Mastectomy	The chance of your cancer coming back anywhere is the same for each option.
What are the side effects and harms?	
Lumpectomy With Radiation	<p>After surgery, pain, numbness, and swelling are common. Out of 100 people, shortly after surgery, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 (2%) get an infection. <p>After radiation, you may feel tired, have peeling skin, or have skin changes that usually go away with time. You may have trouble breastfeeding with the treated breast.</p> <p>Surgery or radiation in the armpit may cause swelling, pain, or numbness in the armpit or arm.</p> <p>Serious harms are rare.</p>
Mastectomy	<p>After surgery, pain, numbness, and swelling are common. Out of 100 people, shortly after surgery, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 (5%) get an infection. • 4 (4%) have serious skin breakdown. <p>Surgery or radiation in the armpit may cause swelling, pain, or numbness in the armpit or arm.</p> <p>Serious harms are rare.</p>
When can I return to my usual activities?	
Lumpectomy With Radiation	Many people return to usual activities 2 days to 2 weeks after surgery. You will begin radiation within a few weeks after surgery.
Mastectomy	Many people return to usual activities within 3 to 6 weeks after surgery.

What else should I know?	
Lumpectomy With Radiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may see a scar, and the skin may feel numb. Your breast may be smaller. Radiation treatment takes time.
Mastectomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your chest will have a scar, look flat, and feel numb. You can wear a breast shape (prosthesis) under your clothes. Some may choose to have breast reconstruction. Discuss options with your surgeon.

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