

In preparation for your mastectomy, outlined below is a list of advice and suggestions compiled from members of the **Basser Center Advisory Board** and **Young Leadership Council** to help you prepare for your surgery. Please note: there may be other considerations depending on what type of reconstruction you choose. **These suggestions and advice do not represent those of the Basser Center or Penn Medicine. You should consult with your surgeon and healthcare team about the specifics of your surgery and treatment plan.**

BEFORE SURGERY



In Preparation:

- Consider taking Senokot® the day before surgery, and for a week after, to help with stool regularity (trust us!).
- Purchase baby wipes, dry shampoo and body cleansing wipes to keep you feeling clean after the hospital.
- Enlist help ahead of time with meals, household chores and transportation to and from appointments.
 - Mealtrain.com** helps organize and calendar meals.



What to Bring:

- Button-down tops or open cardigans and some loose, comfy pants. We also suggest a large fleece zip-up sweatshirt to put on over your surgical bra.
- A comfortable pillow for additional comfort/neck support
- A pillow to place between your chest and seat belt for your ride home in the car
- Slippers, socks with rubber grips, PJs, a robe and a fleece blanket
- Slip-on shoes, which will also come in handy when you are cleared to start walking
- An extra-long charging cord
- Ear plugs
- Throat lozenges and your favorite gum
- A journal to write down your questions, document draining amounts and track prescription intake

AFTER SURGERY



What to Ask:

- Ask your healthcare provider for a Physical Therapy referral for arm exercises. Arrange for PT as soon as you get clearance.
- Ask your healthcare provider if you should have a prescription for managing nausea.
- Ask your surgeon if they have a discount code for scar ointment or silicone strips. Begin applying once you are cleared to do so, after surgery.



At Home:

- Large safety pins to secure drains
- Alcohol swabs to clean the drains
- A drain carrier belt that you can wear around your waist, which prevents drains from falling or snagging
- Gauze pads to replace the original post-op pads. We recommend ABD pads.
- A tall cup with a long straw makes for easy drinking to help you stay hydrated.
- A wedge pillow is a comfortable option for under your knees to alleviate back pain. Two bolster pillows for under your arms are also recommended. A u-shaped body pillow makes sleeping comfortable.
- Drink electrolytes to avoid dehydration.

Tips:

- ▶ You'll likely take a surgical bra home with you from the hospital and may want to purchase another on your own. We would suggest post-surgical bras from AnaOno or nu:titty. These are specially made for post-surgical care and beyond.
- ▶ Insurance may cover your purchase of post-surgery bras and mastectomy bras, breast prostheses and breast forms. With a qualifying prescription from your doctor, you may be eligible. Ask your doctor!
- ▶ Save receipts for everything you purchased and you may be able to submit these to your insurance company. This includes, but is not limited to, surgical bras, scar strips/creams and pillows.

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