

What is a Same Day Mastectomy?

A **mastectomy** (sometimes called a “simple” or “total” mastectomy) means the removal of your breast tissue, including the nipple and areola. Axillary node surgery may also be performed during a mastectomy (see the ‘Axillary Lymph Node Surgery’ information sheet).

A **same day mastectomy** refers to patients who undergo mastectomy +/- lymph node surgery and return to their homes in the same day. There is no overnight stay associated with this procedure. This procedure is done under the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) Protocol. Please refer to the ‘BWH/BWFH ERAS Patient Education’ guide for more information regarding this.

- The procedure takes 1-4 hours. You are then monitored in the recovery area by a nurse until you meet criteria for going home. This is often around 6 hours, but could be shorter or longer.
- If any issues are to arise during your recovery period, there is always the possibility to be admitted to the hospital overnight. You will not be sent home unless you feel comfortable to do so.
- You will be seen by physical therapy while you are in the recovery area, in order to ensure you are capable of getting into, and around, your home safely upon return.
- Surgical **drains** will be placed to collect fluid for several days after surgery. Please refer to the ‘Caring for Your Drain’ guide for more information. Your recovery room nurse will help educate you on how to care for these before you leave as well.
- Your surgeon will discuss with you if you are a candidate for this type of procedure. Certain medical conditions and other risks may preclude you from being a candidate. Candidacy will be discussed at the time of your office visit. This is not a decision that is made on the morning of surgery.
- You will be provided with a VNA, or a nurse from a Visiting Nurse Association, who will come to your home after surgery to assess your incision(s) and drain(s). This will be arranged prior to surgery, and most often, the first visiting nurse visit is on post-op day 1, or the day immediately following surgery.
- It is important to assign a family member or friend to assist you in your post-op recovery. The VNA does not always visit every day, so it is important to have someone at home with you for at least the first few days after surgery.
- If you have any questions or concerns once you are home, you are encouraged to call your surgeons office directly, or the surgeon on call. All of this information will be provided to you on your discharge paperwork.