

Do choices related to breast reconstruction after mastectomy affect women's long-term perceptions of body image?

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Results from a study published in *Psycho-Oncology* suggest that women with breast cancer recover from negative impacts of mastectomy on body image within four years of surgery, whether they have immediate,

delayed, or no breast reconstruction.

The study included 100 women with high-risk breast cancer who underwent mastectomy and were surveyed annually for four years. Sixty-one women chose immediate [breast reconstruction](#), 16 chose delayed reconstruction, and 23 chose no reconstruction. Investigators found little difference between the timing of breast reconstruction (or no reconstruction) on most long-term body image scores.

"Empowering women with the choice of breast reconstruction options may be an important contributing factor in restoring [body image](#) in [women](#) undergoing mastectomy, regardless of the option they choose," said lead author Kathy Dempsey, Ph.D., of the University of Sydney, in Australia. "Breast cancer surgeons have a duty of care to their patients who require mastectomy to ensure they are informed of all breast reconstruction options and to support them in obtaining their choice even if it is not available locally."

More information: Kathy Dempsey et al, The role of breast reconstruction choice on body image patient-reported outcomes at four years post-mastectomy for breast cancer: A longitudinal prospective cohort study, *Psycho-Oncology* (2021). [DOI: 10.1002/pon.5776](https://doi.org/10.1002/pon.5776)

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