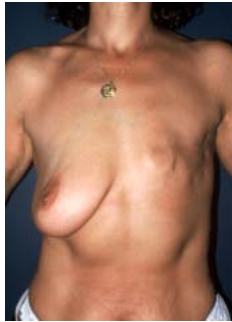


BREAST RECONSTRUCTION AFTER MASTECTOMY FOR CANCER



Breast cancer often leads to mastectomy or breast amputation . in most cases there is a possibility to reconstruct the amputated breast . This is a rather sophisticated procedure and its indication is often dependant of the technique used for the primary amputation. It will for instance depend on the severity of the tumor but also of adjuvant therapies such as radiotherapy or chemotherapy .

All these techniques aim at giving to the patient a better life with a nearly normal breast. They sometimes require several stages and need a lot of patience . they tend to give back throughout modern procedures a new feeling of femininity to the patient.

This reconstruction can be done immediately during the procedure for amputation , in the same operating stage ; this is the immediate reconstruction . In some cases and for different reasons it can also be performed later , a few months after the amputation ; this is called a delayed breast reconstruction . In case of bad result or failure due to an eventual complication (infection , necrosis linked to radiotherapy , malposition ...) the breast can be reconstructed a second time by another procedure ; this is a secondary breast reconstruction .

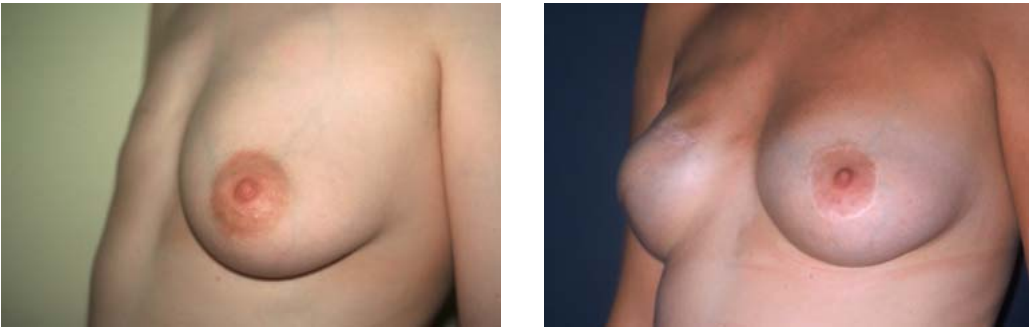
More or less there are four or five possibilities to achieve a breast reconstruction . it can be reconstructed with a breast implant , filled with silicon gel or with saline . this implant can be round or have an anatomical shape . It is inserted through the mastectomy scar and usually placed beneath the pectoralis muscle . In some cases this procedure can be prepared by a previous stage of skin expansion . This is done with a specific breast skin and muscle expander placed in the same manner and must be inflated every week until complete expansion .

In case the quality of the skin is not good enough or in case of secondary reconstruction, another possibility is to use the skin of the back or of the belly . this is a reconstruction by a rather complex flap that will bring to the chest a muscle with the attached skin and its vascularisation . these two techniques are called : the latissimus dorsi flap technique and the T.R.A.M. technique ; in the first one, the volume is often given by a breast implant placed under the flap in the same stage .

In all cases a second stage is nearly always necessary in order to make a symmetrical contralateral breast and to reconstruct the areola and the nipple .

All this, is always a long series of procedures that has to be discussed very seriously with your plastic surgeon .

Case 1 : reconstruction after right breast amputation, by flap and implant:



Case 2 : before , during , and after mastectomy and reconstruction :

