

Important information for breast reconstructive surgery patients

Inside this leaflet, you will find some important information you need to know regarding your forthcoming surgery. Please take the time to read it and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact the team using the contact details at the end of the leaflet.

Those patients taking the drug Tamoxifen, having either an abdominal based free flap (Deep Inferior Epigastric Perforator (DIEP) flap, Muscle Sparing Transverse Rectus Abdominis Muscle (MS-TRAM) flap, Superficial Inferior Epigastric Artery (SIEA) flap or thigh based free flap (Transverse Upper Gracilis (TUG), L shaped Upper Gracilis (LUG) or Diagonal (DUG) flap) must stop this 3-4 weeks before their surgery and recommence 2 weeks post operation.

There is no need to stop this drug if you are having a Latissimus dorsi (LD) flap from the back, or tissue expander/implant reconstruction.

If you are taking Letrozole (Femara®), Exemestane (Aromasin®) or Anastrozole (Arimidex®), you do not need to stop these.

Owing to the slight increased risk of blood clots in either the legs (Deep Vein Thrombosis or DVT) or lungs (Pulmonary Embolism or PE), we will provide a prescription of Dalteparin (Fragmin®) (blood thinning injections) to patients undergoing reconstruction using their abdomen or thigh. You will be given these in the pre-assessment clinic and the nurses will explain how to give yourself the injections. You will be instructed to self-administer an injection the night before your surgery and then for 14 days after your discharge. You may also be asked to wear your anti-embolism stockings for 3 weeks after surgery.

Bras (for all types of breast surgery):

- 2-3 bras are required
- To be worn for 6-8 weeks; 23 hours a day
- Soft/Supportive
- Non-wired and non-padded
- Front fastening preferably (can be purchased from M&S® / Macom® / Lipoelastic® - high street sports shops (other brands are available).
- You can use mastectomy bras or breast feeding/nursing bras with clips on the shoulder
- If using a back-fastening bra please bring 2-3 bra extenders with you to increase the size of the bra around the chest to allow for swelling.



Bra



Bra extenders

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DIEP/ MS-TRAM / SIEA / Bipedicled DIEP (abdominal based free flap reconstructions):

- Abdominal control knickers / 'shapewear'. Can be purchased from Macom® / Lipoelastic® / Spanx® / high street sports shops (other brands are available).
- To be worn for 6-8 weeks, 23 hours a day
- 2-3 pairs
- High-waisted
- Medium support/control
- May need to be a size larger than current underwear size
- You can wear your usual cotton knickers underneath for comfort.



Body Shaper

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TUG/LUG/DUG (thigh based free flap reconstruction):

Cycling shorts or equivalent 'shapewear' shorts or leggings (depending on the position of the thigh scar). These can be purchased from Macom® / Lipoelastic® / high street sports shops (other brands are available).

- To be worn for 6-8 weeks; 23 hours a day
- 2-3 pairs
- Medium support
- Ankle length leggings may be more comfortable for LUG /DUG patients
- These may need to be a size larger than your current underwear size
- You can wear your usual cotton knickers underneath.



Cycling shorts



Leggings

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Useful contact information

Should you have any further questions or need further advice or information please do not hesitate to contact the hospital.

Macmillan Breast Reconstruction Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS)

Tel: 01342 414302 or 01342 414306 (answer machine available) Qvh.breastcare@nhs.net

Pre-Assessment Department

Tel: 01342 414292

Pharmacy / Patient medication helpline

Tel: 01342 414215



Please ask if you would like this leaflet
in a different format.

QVH Macmillan Breast Reconstruction Nurses BCN1401

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