



Breast  
Cancer  
Support  
AOTEAROA  
'We've been there too'

If you've had a breast cancer diagnosis, recently or in the past, and you'd like to talk to someone who's had one too, call us.

**0800 273 222**

[support@breastcancersupport.org.nz](mailto:support@breastcancersupport.org.nz)

[www.breastcancersupport.org.nz](http://www.breastcancersupport.org.nz)

 [breastcancersupportnz](https://www.facebook.com/breastcancersupportnz)

Breast Cancer Support Aotearoa Inc. (BCS) is a registered charity CC 10436. Our trained peer support volunteers provide information and support based upon their own experiences and do not give medical advice.



## Questions to Ask Your Surgeon



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## Questions to ask your surgeon

If you have just received a diagnosis of breast cancer and surgery is recommended, here are some questions to ask that may help with your decision making.

- **What is the best surgery for me?**
- **What are the risks and potential complications? How do these compare with the benefits?**
- **Can I choose between having the lump removed and a mastectomy?**
- **How will my breast look after surgery?**
- **Is reconstruction an option for me?**
- **If I have a mastectomy, how likely is it that I'll need radiotherapy?**
- **Is chemotherapy before surgery an option for me?**
- **How long will I be in hospital?**
- **How much time should I allow for recovery at home?**
- **When will my first follow-up appointment be?**
- **What should I expect after surgery? Pain, swelling, numbness?**
- **Will I need any further treatment after surgery?**
- **When can I go back to work and resume normal activities?**
- **What is my risk of lymphoedema?**
- **What activities should I not do while I am recovering at home?**

Prepared by Mary Sylvester MA BA SCM RN in collaboration with The Research Team. Revised April 2022

## Helpful New Zealand websites

### Breast Cancer Support Aotearoa Inc. (BCS)

0800 273 222

[www.breastcancersupport.org.nz](http://www.breastcancersupport.org.nz)

New Zealand's foremost national peer support organisation for those experiencing breast cancer. National 365-day help line, community support groups, individual support with a BCS volunteer.

### Breast Cancer Foundation NZ (BCFNZ)

0800 902 732

New Zealand's leading source of breast cancer education and information. Access to Mybc online support and specialist Breast Nurse (0800BCNURSE), free counselling.

### Sweet Louise

0800 793 385

[www.sweetlouise.co.nz](http://www.sweetlouise.co.nz)

Practical and social support for those living with advanced (metastatic) breast cancer.

### Breast Cancer Aotearoa Coalition (BCAC)

[www.breastcancer.org.nz](http://www.breastcancer.org.nz)

Advocacy organisation working to make world-class detection, treatment and care accessible to everyone with breast cancer in Aotearoa. Produces the *Step by Step* resource for newly diagnosed.

### Health Navigator

[www.healthnavigator.org.nz](http://www.healthnavigator.org.nz)

Reliable source of information and healthcare resources.

