

## After partial mastectomy

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Breast-conserving surgery (partial mastectomy) may be performed if the tumour is localised and if the size of the tumour relative to the breast size enables a satisfactory aesthetic outcome.

### Wound care

The wound may be showered gently when taking a shower. If you have wound tape, that may get wet as well. If there is exudate from the wounds, remove the tape and shower the wounds daily. After showering, cover the wound with gauze if there is exudate. You may only take a bath, go to the sauna or swim when the wound has properly closed. You may apply deodorant under your arms once the wounds have closed.

### Wound tape/stitches

As a rule, the wound is closed with absorbable stitches that do not have to be removed. If you have non-absorbable stitches, these will be removed by a nurse at your health care centre. Your doctor will tell you when the stitches should be taken out. Call your health care centre to make an appointment for the stitch removal. You can remove wound tape 2 weeks after the operation.

### Physical activity

Normal physical activity (walking, cycling) is allowed, but you should avoid heavy carrying and lifting with the hand and arm on the operated side for a month after the procedure. Perform the arm exercises daily as instructed. Your doctor will estimate how much sick leave you need. You may drive a car as soon as you feel up to it.

### Lymphedema (accumulation of tissue fluid)

Tissue fluid may accumulate in the wound area, resulting in swelling, a sense of tightness or pain. The fluid accumulating in the wound area may be removed by aspiration with a syringe and needle. If you need assistance, call the breast cancer nurse, Monday-Friday 8 am–3 pm, tel. 044 707 9755.

### After removal of lymph nodes

If you have had lymph nodes removed from your armpit, you should avoid damaging the arm on the operated side. Use protective gloves while performing housework or gardening. Dry skin is prone to lesions, which is why you should use skin lotion or cream on a daily basis.

There may be some swelling in the arm after the operation. The arm on the operated side must not be used for blood sampling or blood pressure measurement. Vaccinations or other injections should not be given in the affected arm while you are recuperating.

### Follow-up appointment

The follow-up appointment is about 2 weeks after the operation at the Surgery Outpatient Clinic. You will be told about the results of biopsies taken during surgery and any further courses of treatment at the visit. You will be informed of your follow-up appointment time and given instructions when you are discharged.

Talk to your doctor before using hormonal medications.

Examine your breasts regularly and inform your doctor of any changes.

Please contact, if there is

- increasing pain, warmth, redness or swelling in the wound area
- foul-smelling discharge from the wound
- or if you develop a fever

### Contact information

Surgical ward 3  
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