



# Breast prostheses, bras and clothes after surgery



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# Introduction

This booklet provides practical information about breast prostheses (artificial breast forms), bras and clothes for women who have had breast surgery. It may also be useful for women whose breasts are naturally different from each other in size or shape.

For some women, wearing a prosthesis may be a temporary choice prior to reconstruction (creation of a new breast shape using surgery). Other women may choose not (or be unable) to have breast reconstruction and find wearing a prosthesis an effective and suitable long-term choice. Some women choose not to have a reconstruction or use a prosthesis. You can read more about this on page 6.

For some women, surgery doesn't affect how they feel about themselves, but many others find the changes more difficult to accept.

More information about getting further support is on page 30 of this booklet. You may also find it useful to read our booklet **Your body, intimacy and sex**. This includes a section on changes to your body after cancer treatment and our **Moving Forward resource pack** includes topics such as body image and relationships after treatment has finished.

We hope this booklet will address many of your information needs and concerns. If you have further questions or want more information, contact our Helpline on **0808 800 6000**. You will also find details of bra, prosthesis, clothes and swimwear suppliers on page 31.

'When I am at home I don't wear my prosthesis. I am more comfortable not wearing a bra and wearing loose fitting tops to cover up the fact that I have only one breast.'

Helen

## Choosing not to have surgery

Women may decide not to go ahead with a breast reconstruction surgery for a number of different reasons. These include:

- some women feel less concerned about changes to their body than others and may not feel reconstruction is necessary for them
- not wanting to go through the extra surgery and recovery that breast reconstruction involves
- often more than one surgical procedure is necessary to get the required breast or nipple size and shape
- there is a risk the reconstruction will fail
- some women want time to adjust to their new body shape before deciding whether to have reconstruction or not
- a reconstructed breast will not feel like a natural breast
- they feel that nothing will replace the natural breast
- there may be other medical reasons why surgery or an anaesthetic is not possible.

Any decision you make about having a reconstruction or not is based on whether it's right for you.

If you would like more information on breast reconstruction, please see our booklet, **Breast reconstruction**.

'It hasn't changed the way I see myself or how I feel about my body. It's more just a case of adapting to a change.'

**Helen**

# Breast prostheses

## What is a prosthesis?

A breast prosthesis is an artificial breast form that replaces the shape of all or part of the breast that has been removed. It fits in a bra cup with or without a specially formed pocket. 'Prostheses' is the word for more than one prosthesis.

Most breast prostheses are made from soft silicone gel encased in a thin film. They're moulded to resemble the natural shape of a woman's breast, or part of a breast. The outer surface feels soft and smooth, and may include a nipple outline.

## First weeks after surgery

Breast surgery, and sometimes radiotherapy, can make your chest area feel particularly sensitive. Your breast care nurse or one of the ward nurses will usually give you a fabric-covered temporary prosthesis known as a 'softie' or 'cumfie' to wear during this time. You may find that the softie rides up because it's so light. It may look and feel more secure if you adjust the stuffing and either stitch it to the bottom of your bra cup or keep it in place with a safety pin.

When wearing a bra with your softie, try one that is soft and easy to put on as your shoulder may be stiff at first. See the section on 'Bras' on page 8. Our leaflet **Exercises after breast cancer surgery** has exercises to help ease stiffness.

Once your scar area is fully healed and swelling has gone down (usually within six to eight weeks) you can be fitted for a permanent silicone prosthesis. For this you'll need to have a well-fitting, supportive bra.

## Bras

The type of bra you need after surgery will change over time. In the first few weeks after their operation most women use a soft bra that isn't too restrictive. You may find a front fastening bra easier to put on.

In the next few months and possibly up to a year after surgery some women find their shape and size alters due to weight and treatment-related changes. While the nerves repair, skin changes from radiotherapy settle down and the area recovers from surgery it's best to have a bra that has:

- soft seams
- a wide underband
- fully adjustable straps
- full cups
- minimal detailing
- no underwires.

Whether you have had a reconstruction or use a prosthesis it's best to avoid wearing an underwired bra while the area recovers after surgery because the wires can apply pressure to an implant or affect how a prosthesis sits.

Initially after breast surgery you may have swelling. If you have a bra that fits on the loosest hook this can be made tighter as the swelling goes down.

After about a year, once the skin in the chest area has healed and settled down, you can wear less restrictive bras, as long as they still have a full cup to hold a prosthesis in place.

Specialist lingerie shops, chains or department stores usually have experienced bra fitters. An experienced fitter has often had specialist training and seen women who have had breast surgery.







You can buy mastectomy bras that are specifically designed for women who have had a breast removed but any bra, providing it's well fitted with a full cup, is suitable.

If you prefer, you can adapt an ordinary well-fitting and supportive bra by sewing in a piece of stretchy material loosely across the back of the cup, this will provide a pocket in your bra to hold the prosthesis. You can also buy pockets to sew in yourself; alternatively some mail-order companies or high-street shops may be able to do this for you for a small fee. Some NHS hospitals will put a pocket into two or three bras free of charge. If a pocket is too tight, it can affect the bra's shape. Another alternative is to sew in two strips of evenly spaced ribbon, from the top to the bottom of the cup.

Mastectomy bras are exempt from VAT (value added tax) if they're bought by someone who's had breast surgery. The order forms on most mail-order catalogues will have a box you can tick so that you don't have to pay VAT. If you're buying a mastectomy bra from a shop, check with a member of staff before paying for your bra. In some shops, you may need to show a note from your GP (local doctor) explaining you've had a mastectomy. Your doctor may charge a fee for providing this type of letter.

For more information about how to get a well-fitting bra see our leaflet **Your guide to a well-fitting bra** aimed at any woman who wants to know how a bra should fit. It features illustrations and practical tips on how to make sure your bra fits comfortably and gives proper support.

## Financial assistance

Sometimes a specific surgical bra will be advised by the surgeon to help your recovery after surgery. This is different to a mastectomy bra. If you (or your partner) are claiming certain benefits you don't have to pay for a surgical bra. The qualifying benefits are outlined in the Department of Health leaflet HC11 which you can get from your nearest Jobcentre Plus or at the hospital.

If you are not receiving a qualifying benefit but are on a low income you may still be eligible for a free surgical bra or help towards the cost of one under the NHS Low Income Scheme. To find out if the NHS Low Income Scheme can help, you need to fill in an HC1 form. Again, these are available from the hospital, Jobcentre Plus or you can complete an enquiry form online.

The NHS Low Income Scheme helpline is 0300 330 1343. They can give information and advice, and also send you an HC1 form. Surgical bras come under the category of fabric support.

More information is available online from:

NHS Business Services Authority  
[www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk)

NHS Choices  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Macmillan Cancer Support provides grants that can be used to purchase post-surgical and mastectomy bras and swimwear. To find out if you are eligible and for information about the grant application process you can read their publication 'Help with the cost of cancer'. Their contact details are on page 36 of this booklet.

## Recycling bras

If you have any ill-fitting or unwanted bras there are various ways they can be donated and recycled.

- Breast Cancer Care collects any unwanted bras and sends them on to BCR Global Textiles Ltd, an organisation specialising in the reuse and recycling of textiles. The bras are sorted and sent abroad often to developing countries for those who either don't have access to, or are unable to afford new bras. In return BCR Global makes a donation to Breast Cancer Care.
- The lingerie company Nicola Jane (contact details on page 34) also collects mastectomy bras to send on to Huddersfield Royal Infirmary, which then forwards them to The Hospice Casa Sperantei in Romania.
- The Big Bra Hunt is an Oxfam campaign where bras are collected and recycled either in the UK or sent abroad.

## Prosthesis styles

Prostheses come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and skintones. They're made from materials that are designed to move, feel and weigh as similar to a natural breast as possible. It's important that your prosthesis suits your lifestyle as much as possible. Not all will be available on the NHS. Details of some suppliers are on page 31.

### Full or standard prosthesis

This prosthesis is designed to go straight against the chest wall where all breast tissue has been removed so the back of it is flat. It's matched in size and shape to your remaining breast. If you've had both breasts removed you can select the size you feel most comfortable with.

### Partial or shaped prosthesis

A partial prosthesis is for women who have had part of their breast removed. It's worn inside a bra and is shaped to fill out the breast outline. It's made of the same silicone material as most full breast prostheses.

### Shell prosthesis

This is a type of partial prosthesis which may be used if your breasts are different in size from each other. It's a soft 'shell' of silicone that fits over your smaller breast so that it matches the larger one. This type of prosthesis can also be useful for women who have had breast reconstruction surgery where symmetry has not been achieved, or if an implant is in the process of being expanded.

## Stick-on prosthesis

A stick-on prosthesis (full or partial) sticks directly onto the skin. These can suit women who are active, or who want to wear a less supportive bra as not all of the weight is taken by the bra. They can also be worn with strapless dresses and tops if the clothing is supportive enough.

Most women will be advised not to wear a stick-on prosthesis for the first few months after surgery or during (and sometimes after) radiotherapy as it may damage the skin. Most have a sticky surface as part of the prosthesis itself that can be worn attached directly to the chest wall or as a regular prosthesis with a protective backing in place.

## Prosthesis shapes

### Symmetrical

A symmetrical form is usually an oval or triangular shape which can be worn on either the left or right side.

### Teardrop

The teardrop shape is often more suitable for women whose breasts are fuller in the lower and outer area and less full above the nipple. These can also be worn on the right or left side.

### Asymmetrical

These are generally more suitable for women who have had more extensive surgery as they have extensions to fit under the arm or upper chest wall. They are specifically designed for the left or right side.

'The prosthesis isn't a good match for my skin colour as I am mixed race and have a light brown skin colour.'

**Helen**

## Weight

Silicone prostheses come in different weights. The most suitable weight will depend on how heavy your natural breast is or, if you have had both breasts removed, what you find comfortable.

A full-weight prosthesis may make you feel more balanced as it matches the weight of the other breast. However, if you need a large size, a lighter-weight version might be more comfortable. If a breast prosthesis is too light it can ride up so it won't be level with the other breast. If this happens discuss it with the person who fitted your prosthesis as you may need to be reassessed, or get advice about wearing a different type of bra.

## Materials

Most prostheses are made from silicone which is a soft gel-like substance. Foam prostheses are also available. A foam prosthesis is lighter and cooler. It may be more suitable if you're particularly active or you may find this style more comfortable in warmer weather. An alternative would be a prosthesis that is filled with polypropylene beads. These mould into the shape of the bra and, as air is able to circulate, they are also cooler.

## Skin tones

Although it might be difficult to achieve an exact match, many prostheses are available in colours to suit your skin tone. Having a prosthesis that is as close to your skin tone as possible can help you feel more comfortable and confident. Some companies make prostheses to order or can add colour to existing products. These specially made prostheses may take longer to supply. Some women make or buy a cover for their prosthesis that is an even closer match to their own skin.

Talk to your breast care nurse or fitter about a prosthesis that works with your skin tone.





## Backings and covers

The backing of most prostheses is made of the same material as the front. Some may have a different backing, such as fabric or a soft panel of gel, designed to make them more comfortable. Backings that can be moulded to fit an uneven chest wall are also available.

It's possible to get a soft fabric cover or a bra pocket to cover the silicone surface although the prosthesis may not sit as well. This can prevent a rash or skin reaction developing, which might happen if you get hot and sweat behind your prosthesis. If you have a rash, you should talk to your breast care nurse. Air sometimes gets trapped behind the prosthesis and when it escapes it can make a noise. A cover usually stops this happening.

Some prostheses come with a cover, or you may have to order one separately. If you'd like a cover, talk to your fitter.

## Swim prosthesis

This is made especially for use when swimming and doesn't get damaged by salt water or chlorine. Some swim prostheses are clear.

In Wales you can have additional swim prostheses on the NHS. However, this does not apply in the rest of the UK.

## Prosthetic nipples

Artificial nipples are self-sticking and made of soft silicone that can be worn on a reconstructed breast or a breast form. They come in different sizes and skin colours but some hospitals custom-make them so they match the nipple on your other breast. Alternatively, you might find it easier to use a nipple shield (cover) on the remaining nipple so it looks less obvious. You can buy these from specialist suppliers and some high-street shops.

## Getting your prosthesis

Your breast care nurse will arrange a fitting appointment for you if you are having a permanent prosthesis. The breast care nurse may do the fitting herself or it may be done by another trained fitter, such as a surgical appliance officer or a representative from a prosthesis company.

Some women find it helpful to look at the selection of prostheses before their appointment, or even before their operation if possible so that they have an idea of what to expect. You can discuss this with your breast care nurse.

NHS patients do not have to pay for their prostheses. If you are a private patient, you will be provided with a softie. You can ask your medical team or breast care nurse (if you have one) where you will have your prosthesis fitting. This is often at the local NHS hospital. Check to see if your private health scheme covers the cost of your prosthesis. If you have to pay for your prosthesis you won't have to pay the VAT on it and the fitter will ask you to sign a VAT exemption form stating that you have had breast surgery. Alternatively you may be able to have a prosthesis from the NHS in the same way that NHS patients can apply for a replacement (see page 21).

You'll usually be given the prosthesis at your appointment or very soon afterwards. However, if you choose a style that is not in stock, you may have to wait longer.

Although it's not advisable to buy a prosthesis without trying it first, they're also available through mail-order catalogues and from some high-street shops.



## The prosthesis fitting

### What to take with you:

- a well-fitting bra (see page 8)
- a plain, light-coloured top. This makes it easier to choose a prosthesis that gives you a good shape. You might prefer to wear a top that can be put on and taken off quickly and easily. You could also take a variety of tops with different necklines.

### At the fitting:

- you should have sufficient privacy
- you should be able to check for yourself in a mirror what the prosthesis looks like in your bra, and with clothing over it
- there should be a selection of products
- there should be enough time for you to make the right choice.

Your prosthesis should feel comfortable, give you a good shape and be a reasonable match to your skin colour.

'Ask about all the alternatives, don't get anything too heavy, take into account your lifestyle; if you swim or exercise a lot get a prosthesis that allows you to keep it on.'

Sally

## Looking after your prosthesis

The prosthesis fitter will give you information on how to care for your particular type of prosthesis. If you follow the advice on looking after your prosthesis it should last several years.

Generally, you should look after a silicone breast prosthesis as you would your own skin. Wash it daily in warm soapy water and dry it with a towel. If you have a stick-on prosthesis there may be specific products that you need to use to keep the prosthesis clean. Your prosthesis supplier will be able to tell you more about these.

When you aren't using your prosthesis, store it in the shaped unit inside the box it came in.

Take care not to catch the prosthesis with sharp objects such as rings or brooches as these may damage it, causing the silicone to leak. If it's damaged you can seal the tear temporarily with a sticking plaster.

## Replacing your prosthesis

Your prosthesis will have a guarantee but the length of this can vary and most prostheses often last longer than the period of the guarantee. The NHS will replace your prosthesis when it is worn out. You can have a reassessment if your prosthesis is no longer a good fit, even if it's still in good condition. This might happen if your body weight or shape changes or your lifestyle alters (for example, if you become more active).

The process for getting a replacement prosthesis will depend on what happens in your local area and whether you have been discharged from the breast clinic or not.

You can contact your breast clinic to arrange a prosthesis reassessment and fitting, or ask your GP (local doctor) for a referral to the breast clinic or prosthesis fitter if you no longer attend follow-up appointments. New prosthesis styles are developed frequently, so when you need a replacement it's a good idea to have a reassessment rather than directly replacing the one you already have.

If you had your surgery privately, ask your insurance company if they cover the cost of future replacement prostheses. If they don't you can ask your GP to refer you to an NHS breast clinic or prosthesis fitter to be fitted with a free replacement.

If your prosthesis is damaged due to a manufacturing fault, you should be reassessed and given a free new one if you're an NHS patient. If it's damaged because you have punctured it or not followed the care instructions, you may be charged for replacing it.

## What to do with your used prostheses

You may wish to donate your used prosthesis, so it can be sent to countries where access to prostheses is difficult or impossible.

The charity Hospices of Hope sends breast prostheses to Romania. You can send your prosthesis by post or if you live near to one of their 16 shops, you can take it there. To find out where the closest shop is, visit their website [www.hospicesofhope.co.uk](http://www.hospicesofhope.co.uk) For further help you can call their head office on 01959 525110.

'I had three prostheses. First from the NHS was heavy and the wrong shape for me. The following two were adhesive, lighter and looked more like skin.'

Sally

## Travelling abroad

If you are flying abroad and choose to pack your prosthesis in your luggage, it's not unusual for some small air bubbles to appear in the back of your prosthesis. This is because the luggage hold is not pressurised. It will only happen if your prosthesis has a clear back. These small bubbles will disappear shortly after you have landed and won't harm your prosthesis.

If you have a lightweight prosthesis, small bubbles will appear as black dots. Again, these cause no harm and will disappear soon after you land.

### Airport security body scanning

Body scanners are now in place at many airports. The purpose of the scanners is to identify prohibited items, but they will also reveal external breast prostheses. People are randomly picked for a scan or may be scanned if the metal detectors are activated.

You may be worried about what this means for your privacy and feel anxious at the idea of someone noticing your prosthesis.

The current operation of the scanners is governed by the Department for Transport. If selected for a scan you might want to tell the security staff that you are wearing a breast prosthesis before being scanned. Although this may be awkward or embarrassing, you're less likely to be searched than if you have not declared it. Airport security staff are trained on how to approach sensitive issues around surgery and treat passengers respectfully. It may also be helpful for you to carry a letter from your GP or breast specialist, confirming your situation.

The Department for Transport have produced information covering privacy, health and safety, data protection and equality issues.

## What to expect if you're scanned

- You can ask for the security officer analysing the image (the screener) to be female.
- The image does not show facial features, hair or skin tone. The screener will not see you or be able to recognise you from the scan.
- The scan will take place in a security area with a member of airport staff present. It only takes a few seconds.
- The images are viewed remotely from the machine, and are deleted immediately after analysis.

It's an individual decision by the member of security staff as to whether they conduct a body search after viewing someone's scan. This means that wearing a breast prosthesis does not always lead to a body search, but may do so. You can request a female security officer to conduct a body search.

'I did use a stick-on prosthesis for two years. It was good and I could swim in it. I bought it through a specialist catalogue. I found it a nuisance to have to take all the cleaning equipment with me when I travelled by air.'

**Sally**



## Clothes and swimwear

It's common to feel anxious about your appearance after surgery and worry that none of your clothes will ever look the same. Most women find with time they can regain some confidence in knowing what works for them and what makes them feel more comfortable.

### Clothes

The following information and suggestions will be of particular use to women who wear a prosthesis. However, they may also give ideas to women whose breasts differ from one another in shape or size and for women who don't wear a prosthesis.

#### Strapless clothes and narrow straps

Some strapless tops and dresses or clothes with narrow straps may be made of material that provides good support. Some have an extra support panel in the bra area. This may be enough to hold your prosthesis in place so it looks and feels comfortable.

If there's not enough support you could try:

- using a safety pin to attach a soft fabric prosthesis (softie) directly inside the garment
- wearing a strapless bra with your usual or a stick-on prosthesis (providing your usual prosthesis is not too heavy for a strapless bra)
- wear a bra with transparent or decorative straps.

## Going without a bra

If you prefer not wearing a bra at all, you can still adjust your clothes and wear them with a prosthesis if you want to. You could:

- pin a softie into other underwear such as a vest top or camisole
- use a stick-on prosthesis with clothing that has good in-built support
- wear pocketed clothing, available from some mail-order catalogues.

These clothes are usually designed to be worn with a silicone prosthesis. You may prefer to try them on first and see if they work for you.

Going without a bra after a mastectomy for long periods may cause pain and discomfort in your neck, shoulders and back, especially if your remaining breast is large.

## Low necklines

If you want to wear a low neckline but still cover part of your chest area you can try:

- a camisole or vest top underneath a V-necked top so that it is visible across the 'V'
- a camisole-style bra, available from specialist catalogues, made with lace inserted between the cups that will cover the cleavage area
- a lightweight lacy or semi-transparent top worn over a low-necked item, to disguise the cleavage area while still allowing the clothing beneath to show through
- using lingerie tape to attach clothing securely to the skin
- a draped scarf.

## Low or revealing backs

You can buy bra-strap extensions from mail-order catalogues and some department stores. Instead of fastening at your back, these continue round your body and fasten lower down at the front, to enable you to wear clothes with low backs.

If a dress or top is reasonably supportive in the chest area, you could try using a stick-on prosthesis, or secure a softie with a safety pin, without wearing a bra. You can also buy bras with straps that can be crossed at the back, which will enable you to wear tops with cut-away shoulders.

## Sleepwear

If you want to wear a prosthesis in bed, you could consider:

- a 'sleep' bra or very soft, low-support bra with a softie
- pocketed nightwear, available from some catalogues
- a camisole or nightdress with a softie pinned in place
- a stick-on prosthesis; this usually needs to be worn with some support, but you may find it stays in place on its own.

## Going without a prosthesis

You may choose not to wear a prosthesis at all. Many women prefer how this looks and feels.

If you have had one of your breasts removed, you can make the two sides of your body seem more balanced by wearing dark, patterned fabrics and loose-fitting clothes.

If you want to distract the eye further, you could wear overshirts, jackets, scarves or jewellery.

If you want to disguise a small difference between your breasts without using a prosthesis, a well-fitted padded bra can provide a good shape.

If you have had both of your breasts removed your chest area will be symmetrical. Many women prefer how this looks and feels but you could also try some of the ideas above.



## Swimwear

### High-street swimwear

Some high-street shops sell suitable swimwear, including one-piece and two-piece costumes. The top needs to be cut high enough over the breast area and under the arms to cover the prosthesis. It also needs to have some structure, which is usually provided by cups.

You could adapt a high-street swimsuit with cups by making your own pocket to hold a prosthesis in place, or simply by stitching two strips of ribbon from top to bottom across the back of the cup.

If you do this you will need to wear a lightweight prosthesis or foam leisure prosthesis otherwise the prosthesis may be too heavy to wear in a swimsuit that has not been designed for use with a prosthesis.

Although you can swim in a silicone or foam leisure prosthesis it's important to rinse it well afterwards to avoid any possible damage from the chlorine or salt water.

### Mastectomy swimwear

You may prefer to wear pocketed mastectomy swimwear. This type of swimwear can be found in some high-street shops, large department stores or specialist shops. There's also a large range available in mail-order catalogues. Most are cup-sized. They come in one-piece costumes, two-piece bikinis and tankinis. You can use your regular silicone prosthesis or a swim prosthesis in a mastectomy swimsuit.

You don't need to pay VAT on mastectomy swimwear if you have had breast cancer surgery (see page 11).

'I found an adhesive prosthesis made me less conspicuous in the swimming pool communal changing room.'

Sally

## Further support

Everyone has different feelings about their body and how they look after breast surgery and there is no wrong or right way to feel. It's natural to have concerns. You may wonder how friends and family will react, or what people might say when you return to your everyday activities such as work.

By taking simple measures you can become more confident about your body and how you look, which may affect other areas of your life in a positive way. These measures might include having a suitable prosthesis fitted, choosing an attractive, well-fitting bra, or making some adjustments to your clothes.

Some areas have support groups where you can talk to other women and find out what has worked for them. Your breast care nurse will also be able to tell you about local support.

What's important is that you can make your own choices and find what is most comfortable and works best for you.

### Lingerie Evenings

Breast Cancer Care's Lingerie Evenings are an opportunity for women who have had breast surgery to learn more about choosing a bra after surgery.

The evenings include a practical guide of what to look for in a bra, an opportunity to be fitted and a chance to see how the lingerie looks on volunteer models who have had breast cancer. Lingerie Evenings always take place in private areas so they provide a safe, relaxed environment for meeting others in a similar situation and for sharing experiences. For details of your nearest Lingerie Evening, contact your local Breast Cancer Care Centre (see inside back cover) or visit [www.breastcancercare.org.uk/services](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/services)

## Suppliers: bras, prostheses, clothes and swimwear

Below are just some suppliers of bras, prostheses, clothes and swimwear. Some are specifically for women who have had breast surgery, while others are more general companies other women who have had surgery have found useful. Please note that this is not a complete list and Breast Cancer Care can't guarantee the quality of the services or products provided by these companies. Your hospital may also sell specialist bras and swimsuits.

### Note about products

The term 'accessories', which are sold by some of the companies listed, covers items such as sew-in pockets, bra strap extenders, nipple covers, prosthetic nipples, and prosthesis carrying cases.

They vary between suppliers. All of the prosthesis suppliers listed have some prostheses in a range of skin tones.

#### George at Asda

[www.asda.com/george](http://www.asda.com/george)

Products: range of post-surgery bras.

Availability: online.

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#### About the Girl Ltd

Telephone: 01444 417 791

Email: [enquiries@aboutthegirl.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@aboutthegirl.co.uk)

Website: [www.aboutthegirl.co.uk](http://www.aboutthegirl.co.uk)

Products: mastectomy bras (30A–42G) with matching underwear and swimwear. Availability: showroom in Haywards Heath, online shop and telephone orders.

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#### Amoena (UK) Ltd

Telephone: 0845 072 4027 (freephone order line),

0845 072 4023 (freephone enquiry line)

Email: [shop.uk@amoena.com](mailto:shop.uk@amoena.com)

Website: [www.amoena.com/uk](http://www.amoena.com/uk)

Products: specialist bras, swimwear, sportswear and prostheses. Availability: catalogue, mail order, fitting service/ shop in Eastleigh, Hampshire (by appointment).

### **Anita UK Ltd**

Telephone: 020 8446 7478

Email: [anita.gb@anita.net](mailto:anita.gb@anita.net)

Website: [www.anita.com](http://www.anita.com)

Products: specialist bras and swimwear, and prostheses.

Availability: no mail order; available from several of the companies listed here, and some shops. Full details of product range available on their website.

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### **Betty and Belle Ltd**

Telephone: 0161 929 1472

Email: [info@bettyandbelle.co.uk](mailto:info@bettyandbelle.co.uk)

Website: [www.bettyandbelle.co.uk](http://www.bettyandbelle.co.uk)

Products: mastectomy bras, swimwear, tops and prostheses.

Availability: stock available in shop (in Altrincham, Cheshire) and by mail-order service; ring for brochure.

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### **Bouncing Back**

Telephone: (Monday–Friday, 10am–2pm) 0191 477 9449 or 07973 562 175

Email: [info@bouncingbackbras.co.uk](mailto:info@bouncingbackbras.co.uk)

Website: [www.bouncingbackbras.co.uk](http://www.bouncingbackbras.co.uk)

Products: pocketed bras, swimwear and summer tops.

Availability: shop (in Gateshead), mail order, website and home visits (within 25 miles of the shop) for disabled people as the shop has a steep flight of stairs.

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### **The Bra Clinic**

Telephone: 07918 656 628

Email: [info@thebraclinic.co.uk](mailto:info@thebraclinic.co.uk)

Website: [www.thebraclinic.co.uk](http://www.thebraclinic.co.uk)

Products: mastectomy bras, breast forms and swimwear.

Availability: clinics held in locations across the North East, North Yorkshire and County Durham. In addition, home visits can be arranged if preferred.



### **Chantilly Rose**

Telephone: 01564 794288

Email: [info@chantillyrose.co.uk](mailto:info@chantillyrose.co.uk)

Website: [www.chantillyrose.co.uk](http://www.chantillyrose.co.uk)

Products: mastectomy bras, specialist swimwear, breast forms, nightwear and loungewear. Availability: online shop, telephone orders, appointments in Holt, Norfolk and Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire; home fittings available within East Anglia, the West Midlands and Warwickshire.

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### **Contura Belle (Thamert/Silima)**

Telephone: 01295 220 524

Email: [info@conturabelle.co.uk](mailto:info@conturabelle.co.uk)

Website: [www.conturabelle.co.uk](http://www.conturabelle.co.uk)

Products: specialist bras, swimwear, accessories and prostheses. Availability: catalogue, mail order, online shop.

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### **Eloise**

Telephone: 0845 225 5080

Email: [sales@eloise.co.uk](mailto:sales@eloise.co.uk)

Website: [www.eloise.co.uk](http://www.eloise.co.uk)

Products: mastectomy bras, swimwear, prostheses and accessories. Availability: catalogue/mail order/online shop with free returns. Free fitting service at shops in South Wimbledon, London and Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire.

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### **Figleaves**

Telephone: 0345 401 2014

Email: [help@figleaves.com](mailto:help@figleaves.com)

Website: [www.figleaves.com](http://www.figleaves.com)

Products: a range of mastectomy lingerie.  
Availability: online shop.

### **JR Fashion**

Website: [www.mastectomy-clothes.com](http://www.mastectomy-clothes.com)

Products: specially designed garments, worn without bra or prosthesis, for comfort and symmetry.

Availability: online catalogue, online order form.

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### **Little Women**

Telephone: 01455 208 855

Email: [enquiries@littlewomen.com](mailto:enquiries@littlewomen.com)

Website: [www.littlewomen.co.uk](http://www.littlewomen.co.uk)

Products: small cup bras, some small cup swimwear.

Availability: catalogue, mail order, online shop.

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### **Medasun**

Telephone: 01236 739 668

Email: [customerservices@tpshealthcare.com](mailto:customerservices@tpshealthcare.com)

Websites: [www.medasun.com](http://www.medasun.com)

[www.bodyshapemedasun.com](http://www.bodyshapemedasun.com)

Products: post-surgical support bras, sports bras and girdles.

Availability: online shop, catalogue, customer services.

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### **Nicola Jane**

Telephone: enquiries/orders 0845 265 7595

Email: [customerservice@nicolajane.com](mailto:customerservice@nicolajane.com)

Website: [www.nicolajane.com](http://www.nicolajane.com)

Products: specialist pocketed bras, swimwear and vest tops, prostheses and accessories.

Availability: catalogue, mail order, online shop, pocketing service, fitting service/shops in London, Leeds and Chichester by appointment.

### **Pink Ribbon Lingerie**

Telephone: 020 8516 7744

Email: [info@pinkribbonlingerie.co.uk](mailto:info@pinkribbonlingerie.co.uk)

Website: [www.pinkribbonlingerie.co.uk](http://www.pinkribbonlingerie.co.uk)

Products: mastectomy clothing (lingerie, sleepwear and swimwear) and accessories.

Availability: online and telephone orders.

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### **Royce Lingerie Ltd**

Telephone: 01295 265 557

Email: [sales@royce-lingerie.co.uk](mailto:sales@royce-lingerie.co.uk)

Website: [www.royce-lingerie.co.uk](http://www.royce-lingerie.co.uk)

Products: non-wired pocketed and unpocketed bras.

Availability: catalogue available but mail order via online shop only. Also available from other websites, catalogues and some shops.

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### **Something Pretty**

Telephone: 0141 440 1999

Email: [info@something-pretty.co.uk](mailto:info@something-pretty.co.uk)

Website: [www.something-pretty.co.uk/](http://www.something-pretty.co.uk/)

Products: free measuring and fitting service, specialist pocketed bras, swimwear and prostheses.

Availability: stock available online, via a catalogue and from their shop (in Glasgow), pocketing service available.

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### **Trulife**

Telephone: 0800 716 770

Email: [info@trulife.co.uk](mailto:info@trulife.co.uk)

Website: [www.trulife.com](http://www.trulife.com)

Products: mastectomy bras, leisure forms, prostheses, accessories. Availability: catalogue, mail order.

### **Womanzone**

Telephone: 01925 768 992

Email: [sales@woman-zone.co.uk](mailto:sales@woman-zone.co.uk)

Website: [www.woman-zone.co.uk](http://www.woman-zone.co.uk)

Products: specialist, made-to-measure swimwear, plus some bras, prostheses and accessories.

Availability: catalogue, mail order, online shop, fitting service/ shop in Warrington.

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### **Other organisations**

#### **Macmillan Cancer Support**

89 Albert Embankment

London SE1 7UQ

General enquiries: 020 7840 7840

Helpline: 0808 808 0000

Website: [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

Textphone: 0808 808 0121 or Text Relay

Macmillan Cancer Support provides practical, medical, emotional and financial support to people living with cancer and their carers and families. It also funds expert health and social care professionals such as nurses, doctors and benefits advisers.

# Helping you face breast cancer

Treatments for breast cancer can be complex and if you're wondering where to turn for support in making treatment decisions or coping with side effects, we can help with practical and emotional support.

## Ask us

Our free Helpline is answered by specialist nurses and trained staff with personal experience of breast cancer. They understand your issues and can answer questions. Or you can Ask the Nurse by email on our website.

Free Helpline **0808 800 6000** (Text Relay 18001)  
Monday–Friday 9am–5pm, Saturday 10am–2pm  
[www.breastcancercare.org.uk/ATN](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/ATN)

## Talk to someone who understands

Our Someone Like Me service puts you in contact by phone or email with someone else who's had breast cancer and who's been trained to help.

Online, you can chat to other people going through breast cancer on our professionally moderated discussion Forum or join a free, weekly Live Chat session.

## In your area

We provide a variety of services in person across the UK, including:

HeadStrong prepares you for the possibility of losing your hair because of cancer treatment. In a private meeting, trained volunteers talk with you about how to look after your scalp before, during and after treatment. They'll also share ideas on how to make the most of scarves, hats and other headwear.

Moving Forward Information Sessions and longer courses on adjusting to life after treatment. Both have expert speakers and offer the chance to talk to other people in the same situation as you.

Find out about all our services for people affected by breast cancer at [www.breastcancercare.org.uk/services](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/services) or phone the Helpline. We can help you decide which of our services are right for you.

## We're here for you: help us to be there for other people too

If you found this booklet helpful, please use this form to send us a donation. Our information resources and other services are only free because of support from people such as you.

We want to be there for every person facing the emotional and physical trauma of a breast cancer diagnosis. Donate today and together we can ensure that everyone affected by breast cancer has someone to turn to.

### Donate by post

Please accept my donation of **£10/£20/my own choice of £**

I enclose a cheque/PO/CAF voucher made payable to  
**Breast Cancer Care**

### Donate online

You can give using a debit or credit card at  
**[www.breastcancercare.org.uk/donate](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/donate)**

### My details

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

We might occasionally want to send you more information about our services and activities

- Please tick if you're happy to receive email from us
- Please tick if you don't want to receive post from us

We won't pass on your details to any other organisation or third parties.

Please return this form to Breast Cancer Care, Freepost RRRKZ-ARZY-YCKG,  
5-13 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0NS



# About this booklet

**Breast prostheses, bras and clothes after surgery** was written by Breast Cancer Care's clinical specialists, and reviewed by healthcare professionals and people affected by breast cancer.



**For a full list of the sources  
we used to research it:**

**Phone** 0345 092 0808

**Email** [publications@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:publications@breastcancercare.org.uk)



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**Phone** 0345 092 0808

**Email** [publications@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:publications@breastcancercare.org.uk)





the breast cancer  
support charity

Breast Cancer Care is the only UK-wide charity providing specialist support and tailored information for anyone affected by breast cancer.

Our clinical expertise and emotional support network help thousands of people find a way to live with, through and beyond breast cancer.

Visit [www.breastcancercare.org.uk](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk) or call our free Helpline on **0808 800 6000** (Text Relay 18001).

### Central Office

Breast Cancer Care  
5–13 Great Suffolk Street  
London SE1 0NS  
Phone: 0345 092 0800  
Email: [info@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:info@breastcancercare.org.uk)

### Centres

London and South East of England  
Phone: 0345 077 1895  
Email: [src@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:src@breastcancercare.org.uk)

East Midlands and the North of England  
Phone: 0345 077 1893  
Email: [nrc@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:nrc@breastcancercare.org.uk)

Wales, South West and Central England  
Phone: 0345 077 1894  
Email: [cym@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:cym@breastcancercare.org.uk)

Scotland and Northern Ireland  
Phone: 0345 077 1892  
Email: [sco@breastcancercare.org.uk](mailto:sco@breastcancercare.org.uk)