NHS
Royal Devon
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Bra recommendations after breast surgery

(Eastern services)

Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)mailto:
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

If you have had or are due to have breast surgery to treat breast cancer, it can be challenging to know where to start when looking for the best bra to wear after your operation.

After breast conserving surgery, it can be difficult to know which type of bra will provide the best comfort and support. The guidance below outlines what to look for and what we recommend.

What is breast-conserving surgery?

Breast-conserving surgery (wide local excision, therapeutic mammoplasty) removes the cancer while keeping as much of the breast as possible. The list we have compiled will hopefully give you an idea of what you should be looking for and what we would recommend post breast conserving surgery. The main features of a bra will vary, with some being front or back fastening and the depth of the band around the bra itself. Do not purchase a sport bra that goes on over your head (racer back style) as with some surgical procedures we will need you to restrict your arm/shoulder movements. Where possible, please avoid buying zip fronted bras. These can be difficult to fit post-operatively, particularly if you are very swollen.

The bra you choose needs to provide adequate support for the breast and be comfortable to wear day and night for around eight weeks following your therapeutic mammoplasty surgery. It’s best to avoid wearing an underwired bra for two years after surgery.

If you choose to wear a stretchy cotton front-fastening bra, you might find that, around four weeks after surgery, this may not give you enough support, as the initial post-operative swelling would have slightly settled down. We would then advise you to wear a more structured back fastening bra during the day. You may choose to wear the less supportive bra at night.

What to look for in a post-operative bra

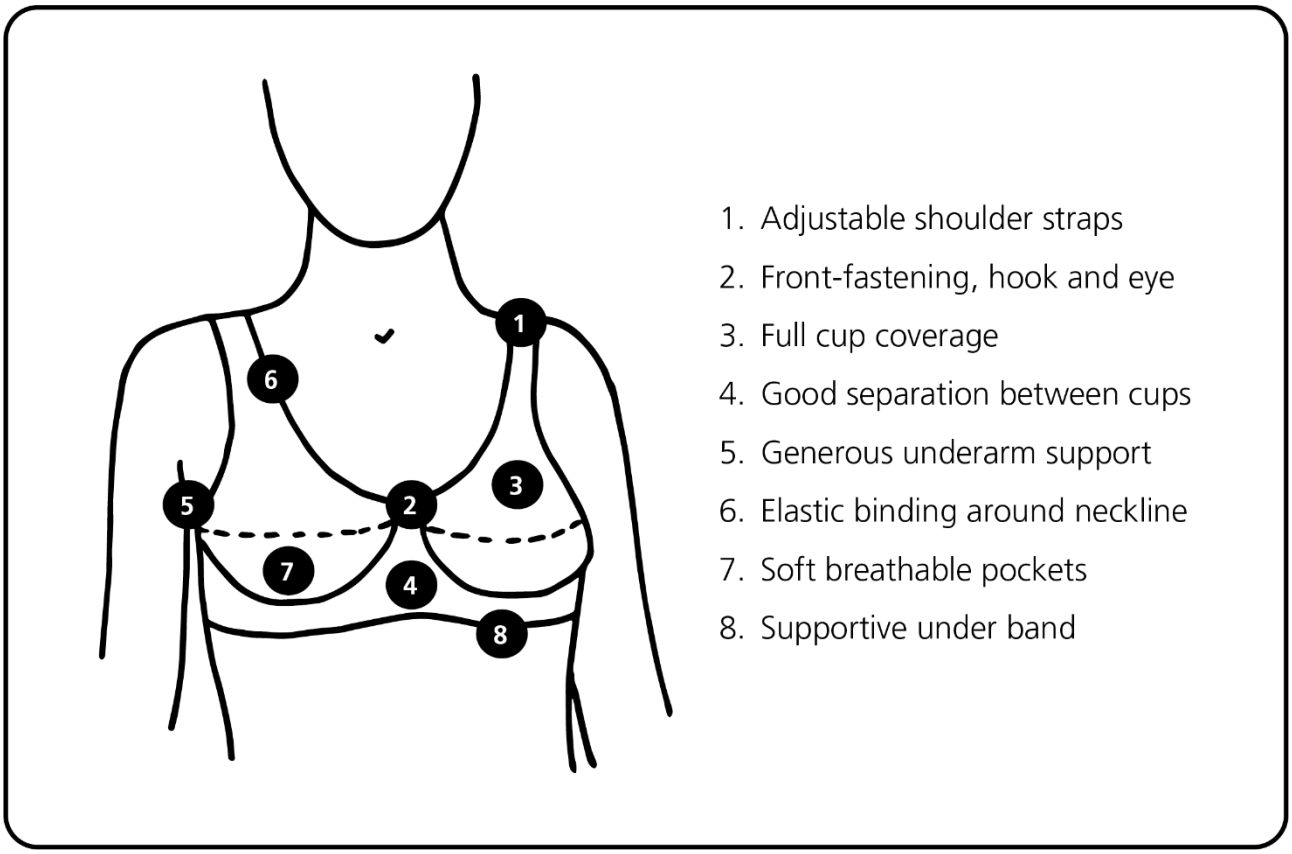
Do:

- choose a soft, supportive, non-wired bra
- ensure it is comfortable enough to wear day and night for around eight weeks after therapeutic mammoplasty
- choose front- or back-fastening styles depending on comfort and mobility
- switch to a more structured back-fastening bra around four weeks post-op if swelling has reduced and extra support is needed.

Don’t:

- avoid sports bras that go on over your head (racer-back style), as these require shoulder movement that may not be advised after surgery
- avoid zip-front bras, which can be difficult to fit if you are swollen
- avoid underwired bras for two years after surgery.

The diagram below identifies the features that we ask you to look for when buying your post-op bra.



These are some recommended bras from different suppliers.

Cancer Research UK

- Post-Surgery Comfort Bra for the initial four to six weeks following a therapeutic mammoplasty
  (VAT exemption following breast cancer surgery)

M&S

- Cotton blend and lace non-wired total support up to 46H
- Total support embroidered full cup up to 44G

Damart (damart.co.uk)

Also available on Amazon.

- Front fastening support up to 46G
- Non-wired support up to 46G

Nicola Jane (nicolajane.com)

- Ruby (pocketed bra) up to 42F
- Isabella (pocketed bra) up to 44H
- Anita, Safina uplift bra (pocketed bras) up to 50D
- Night: Lotta Comfort Bra up to XXL

Triumph (uk.triumph.com)

- Doreen up to 48J

Amoena (amoena.com/uk)

- Isadora (pocketed bra) up to 50DD.

Cotton Traders (cottontraders.com)

- Two pack Eve Non-Wired cotton-rich bras up to 44DD
- Two pack Macy Non-Wired cotton-rich front fastening bras up to 44DD
- Night: two pack Comfort bras up to 4XL.

Other online sites you can buy from

Simply be, Very, Belle Lingerie, Royce, Magic bra

Local bra shops

Le Boudoir Lingerie

12 Cherry Tree Close, Exeter, EX4 5AT
07920 443173

Please note appointments must be pre-booked, as this is not a walk-in shop.

De Bora of Exeter

34 South St, Exeter, EX1 1ED
01392 210142

Because Bras

2 Staples Mews, 16 Exeter Rd, Exmouth, EX8 1PL
07720 243561

Lace lingerie

77 High Street, Honiton, EX14 1PG
01404 42689

Bras and Briefs

6b Fore St, Seaton, EX12 2LA
01297 792230

Blush Lingerie of Budleigh Salterton

26 High Street, Budleigh Salterton, EX9 6LQ
01395 446100

Banbury's

1-5 Gold St, Tiverton, EX16 6QD

Fitting clinics

Nicola Jane fitting appointments available at Exeter Fitting Clinic

The Barefoot Physio, 15 Bartholomew Street East, Exeter, EX4 3BG

Expert Fitter: jill@nicolajane.com

Helpdesk: 01243 537300

Your notes

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
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You can also share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at www.careopinion.org.uk or freephone 0800 122 3135.

Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

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