



**Royal Berkshire**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **Your breast prosthesis**

Information for patients

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent

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## **You have been referred for an appointment to fit a prosthesis (or form) following breast surgery. This leaflet explains what happens next.**

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### **Booking your breast prosthesis appointment**

If you have been advised to book a prosthesis appointment, please call us on 0118 322 7888 or email us on [rbft.bccclinic@nhs.net](mailto:rbft.bccclinic@nhs.net) and leave a message stating your name, hospital / NHS number, date of birth and a contact number. We will contact you to arrange an appointment; these currently take place every two weeks on a Thursday.

For patients living in West Berkshire, we also offer appointments once a month on a Monday at West Berkshire Community Hospital in Thatcham, so please ask if this is more convenient for you.

If you are an NHS patient, you are entitled to one breast prosthesis every two years if you have had a mastectomy (one breast removed), or two prostheses every two years if you have had bilateral mastectomies (both breasts removed).

If you are a private patient or if you require an additional prosthesis, you are able to purchase these products from the companies directly. Please contact us and we can provide you with contact details.

### **What to expect at your appointment:**

You will be seen in a private clinic room by a fitter from a breast prosthesis company. The fitter will discuss your needs with you and may take some measurements. You will be shown a range of products and will be advised about what product may suit your needs. Following the appointment, the Berkshire Cancer Centre (BCC) Outpatients team will order you a breast prosthesis, which can be sent directly to your home or you can come in to collect this, between two and four weeks after the appointment.

## Fitting the prosthesis

You will need to wear a well-fitting bra in order for your prosthesis to look its best and for you to feel comfortable.

Bras that are too small may cause permanent damage to the soft silicone shell so should be avoided.

## Care of your prosthesis

- **Cleaning:** Wash gently in lukewarm water using a mild soap. Pat dry with a soft towel, taking care not to wring or rub. Avoid using perfumes, talcum powder or body lotions on or around your breast prosthesis.
- **Storage:** When you are not wearing your prosthesis, keep it in the box provided. This will help it to keep its shape and will also prevent it from being damaged. Keep this box away from any direct heat.
- **Preventing damage:** Take great care using sharp objects close to your prosthesis. Fingernails, pins, scissors, jewellery etc. could damage the silicone outer shell.
- **Repair:** The outer skin of your prosthesis is smooth and delicate in order for it to feel as realistic as possible. It is possible for this skin to tear at any time, so it is advisable to be prepared by carrying a repair kit with you. This can be roll of 2.5 cm wide Elastoplast, available from any chemist.  
Using the Elastoplast, tape the split edges together across the tear. If the breast form does tear or split, make an emergency repair, as above, and contact the BCC Outpatients team to either order a replacement, or book an appointment in the fitting clinic.
- **Replacement:** With the correct care and attention, your breast prosthesis should last for two to five years. As it becomes older, you may notice the silicone inside becomes “bubbly”, or the outer skin may start to wrinkle a lot. These are signs what you need to contact BCC Outpatients team to make an appointment for a fitting. When attending a fitting appointment, please ensure you are wearing a well-fitting bra.

## **If you are not happy with the prosthesis supplied...**

Occasionally, after a fitting appointment, you may find that you are not entirely happy with the style or size of the breast prosthesis you have been given. If this is the case, you should contact your breast care nurse to arrange for a further fitting appointment. Providing that you have had your breast prosthesis for less than two weeks, the BCC Outpatients team will be happy to exchange it for a different style or size.

## **Contacting us**

Berkshire Cancer Centre Clinic appointments, Tel: 0118 322 7888

Email: [rbft.bccclinic@nhs.net](mailto:rbft.bccclinic@nhs.net)

## **Your prosthesis**

You have been fitted with:

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

RBFT BCC, July 2023

Next review due: July 2025