

Tips for Dressing Post Mastectomy

Deciding what to wear after a mastectomy can seem daunting, but there's no need to sacrifice your own sense of style or comfort.

Start with the basics

Overcoming something as emotionally and physically challenging as a mastectomy creates huge changes in a woman's life. We emerge stronger and more resilient, with a new awareness of our bodies. Inevitably, there's also a new set of considerations when choosing an outfit. Once you're comfortable with the basics, though, there's no reason why your surgery should limit the range of your wardrobe, or hamper your sense of style.



Neckline

While being temporarily limited in the area of décolletage might seem to reduce your choices, remember the changes in your body are usually far less visible to others than they appear to you.

Natural Symmetry

Loose-fitting tops with modest necklines are an easy starting point. With the right breast

form and bra combination, you can achieve a look of natural symmetry without showing cleavage.

Create a Focus Point

Perfect for casual or professional outfits, a top with gathers, knots, drapes and ruffles can give your outfit texture and create a focus point.

Improvise on the Go

Wear the clothes you love. Don't rule out a dress or top with a revealing neckline until you try it on with a cami or camisole bra. Alternatively, a scarf could provide the coverage you need.

Find the Perfect Fit

When shopping for tailored dresses, take note of where the dart sits. This will give you an idea on how a dress or shirt will fit around the breast area before you've even tried it on.



Essential Bras

Bra support and comfort is a must. Ensure you have one of these three essentials on hand for any occasion.

Wire-free soft bra

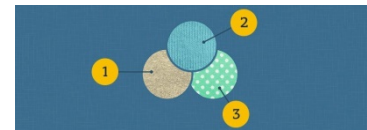
If you're feeling tender, this is a softer alternative to an underwire bra. Look for a bra with slight padding for extra comfort.

T-shirt bra

This should be a staple in every woman's wardrobe. Comfortable and slightly padded with molded cups, T-shirt bras are smooth under your clothes without showing any visible lines.

Front-Closure bra

An essential after mastectomy, a front-closure bra is easy to fasten and is more convenient to use in case range of motion in the arms is a challenge.



Fabrics

More than ever, it's vital to choose clothing made from fabrics that offer all-day comfort, breathe well and don't chafe.

1. Modal

Modal offers superb flexibility, is soft to touch, and drapes beautifully to flatter your figure, with a texture similar to cotton.

2. Jersey

Light and flexible yet insulating, Jersey is a soft and stretchy knit fabric used to make fantastic leggings and classic comfort tees.

3. Cotton

Durable, absorbent and still considered the best natural fabric for its remarkable breathability, cotton is a firm favorite for sensitive skin.



Draw Attention

Down toward legs and shoes

Belts:

Instead of wearing in the belt loops of your pants, cinch at your waist over dresses, coats and oversized shirts, creating a shapely silhouette and drawing attention to the center of your body.

Shorts and patterned skirts:

Attract attention to the lower half of your body with textures and patterns that are bold, pretty or simply interesting to look at.

Statement Shoes:

A killer pair of shoes will draw attention immediately. If you don't have an eye-catching pair, it's time for some shoe shopping.

Upwards to the neck and face with colors and accessories

Earrings:

Now's your chance to wear a bold and flashy set of earrings. There's never been a better excuse to accessorize.

Necklaces:

Wear a short necklace or choker to attract attention upwards. Avoid a necklace that dangles over the bust line as it will draw attention to the area.

Scarves:

A quick way to visually transform an outfit, wearing pretty scarves and shawls is also a subtle way to cover scars or drains.



Wear the right breast form

Whether you prefer a traditional prosthesis or an attachable prosthesis is often simply a matter of personal choice, but new technology has blurred the line between the two, with massive advances in the comfort and appearance of both.

Traditional prostheses

Supported by your pocketed bra and perfect for times when you're wearing loose fitting or thicker fabrics. They are popular because they are easy to get used to.

Attachable prostheses

Attach directly to your chest and are the ideal option to relieve pressure from your bra straps or when getting a little more daring with your neckline.

Comfort is key

It's never worth wearing uncomfortable breast forms. Aside from the discomfort, you risk irritating your sensitive skin and creating posture problems down the road. Keep in mind, too, that your body may change over time as a result of diet, fitness and time itself! What fits you this year might not feel as good next year, so **it's important to visit your fitter regularly.**

Start with these basic tips and you'll find that you have a great range of clothing choices and shopping opportunities! By simply using color, texture and accessories, you can create a fresh new look that's comfortable and an expression of your own beauty.

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