

How often can I have a replacement prosthesis?

Your prosthesis can be replaced free of charge once its warranty runs out—this is usually after 2-3 years. If you gain or lose a significant amount of weight; or there is a manufacturing fault and the prosthesis is still under warranty, it may be replaced sooner. However, if the damage is not due to normal wear and tear a cost is charged for replacement.

What if I had my treatment privately?

If your treatment has been private you will need to purchase your replacement prosthesis. Average cost is approximately £120.00. Check your health insurance details to see if this is covered.

If you are no longer a Private Patient, or you decide to change back to NHS treatment, you have the same rights as an NHS patient.

Please do not hesitate to contact one of the Breast Care Nursing Team for further advice as needed.

Jodie Lupton and Suzy Walker, Breast Care Team

Harrogate District Hospital

Lancaster Park Road

Harrogate, HG2 7SX

01423 885959

Direct Line: 01423 553398

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Harrogate and District 
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INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

THE BREAST PROSTHESIS CLINIC

If you have difficulty reading, understanding or require the content of this leaflet in another language or format i.e. Braille, audiotape or large print, please contact the Breast Care Nurse who will arrange a suitable alternative.

Introduction

Following breast surgery some ladies need a breast prosthesis (false breast). When you first go home you will be given a temporary 'soft' prosthesis until your wound has healed and is more comfortable.

Your Breast Care Nurse will then arrange an appointment for a fitting of a permanent prosthesis.

Aims of the Prosthetic Clinic:

- To provide you with a permanent breast prosthesis and explain how to care for it
- To correctly measure you for a bra
- To provide you with advice on bra and swimwear selection
- To give you the opportunity to talk through any concerns relating to your recent treatment.

At the fitting

When you attend for your fitting it is a good idea to bring or wear a plain coloured T-shirt or top. This means that you can be sure to choose a prosthesis that gives you a smooth outline. You may want to bring a favourite bra or swimsuit that you would still like to wear.

You may wish to bring a friend or partner along for support and also help with choosing the correct prosthesis, a second opinion can be helpful.

Choosing a bra

To make sure that the prosthesis is comfortable and fits well you need to have a well fitting bra. Even if you think you know your correct size it is best to be seen by a trained bra fitter, this can be done by the Breast Care Nurses whilst you attend for your fitting.

You need to choose a bra that fits close to your chest wall, with enough depth of material between the cups to cover the prosthesis.

You should be able to find suitable bras in the high street shops. We will also provide you with a selection of specialist mail order brochures for bras and swimwear.

We also have a stock of bras that you can try on and purchase which may be cheaper than local stores or mail order.

Although prostheses are suitable to be worn against the skin, some women feel more secure with a mastectomy bra, which has a pocket in the cup for your prosthesis. Alternatively you can sew a pocket into your own bra. One of the Breast Care Team will advise you.

What if I have made the wrong choice?

If this is the case do not worry. It is not until you go home and try on different clothes that you can be certain your prosthesis is the right shape and fits correctly. We will replace it for you within a week, so long as it is in good condition and has not been damaged. Please do not hesitate to talk to the Breast Care Nurses.

Can I wear my prosthesis whilst swimming?

Yes you can swim whilst wearing your prosthesis. However, if you are a regular swimmer it may be advisable to buy a swimming prosthesis as chlorine may cause damage.

Caring for your prosthesis

Treat the prosthesis like your own skin. Wash it with warm soapy water and dry with a towel. When not wearing it for long periods place it in the box provided which will help to retain its shape.

Can I have more than one prosthesis?

We can only supply one prosthesis free of charge. However, you are welcome to purchase an additional one if you so wish, but this is not usually necessary.