

Top surgery checklist

Pre surgery:

- Build muscle, focusing on chest, shoulders, and core
 - Fitness FAQ - Beginning Bodyweight course
 - Hybrid Callisthenics
- Move essential supplies (food, cutlery, crockery, toothbrush, medications, etc) to worktop height
- Prunes / fibre pills / anti-constipation medication (start these pre-surgery; opiates can cause your digestion to shut down)
- Put together a hospital bag:
 - entertainment (you could be waiting for hours after arrival)
 - everything you need for the trip home
- List of emergency contacts
- Optional: advanced directive ("living will"), emergency contacts

Immediately post surgery (weeks 0-6)

Supplied by surgeon/hospital

- Post-surgical vest
- Compression socks
- Painkillers
- Fit note

Trip home

- Slip-on shoes
- Button-up shirts
- Tracksuit bottoms (jeans may present issues early on)
- Zip-up hoodie
- Anti-nausea medication
- Pillow or stuffed toy for protecting your chest (eg: if travelling by car)

Bedtime

- Bulky pillows ('armchair' style pillow, wedge pillow, V-shaped nursing pillow)
- Button-up pyjamas

Bath time

- Sponge onna stick
- Waterproof poncho / plastic wrap (for showering/hair washing without getting bandages wet)
- Wet wipes (for washing without washing)
- Intimate/'feminine' wipes (different formula for your bits)
- Spray/dry shampoo
- Spray deodorant
- Electric toothbrush

Day time

- Entertainment (books, DVD box sets, video games, lego models, etc) - assume low concentration / easily tired / poor coordination
- Pillow / stuffed toy (holding something keeps your arms occupied so you don't automatically use them to help yourself stand up - also for hugging when/if you need to sneeze)
- Extra blankets and pillows (shivering with chest wounds is An Experience; try to avoid it)
- Extra painkillers
- Flight socks (you *really* don't want a DVT)
- Slippers (having cold feet sucks)

Food etc

- Lap tray
- Water bottle / thermos flask (hydration helps you heal and reduces the chance of a DVT)
- Healthy snacks (all calories are good calories while you're healing, but you're going to need extra nutrients)
- Pre-cut fruit/veggies in the freezer for if you want/have to cook
- 1-2 weeks' worth of microwavable meals in the freezer
- Try to choose softer food for the first week or so - avoid things that require cutting (eg: steak) unless someone else can cut it for you

Exercises and physiotherapy

- Start walking about as soon as possible
- Look for yoga, stretches, etc for mastectomy/breast surgery, eg:
 - Mastectomy Recovery Yoga Week 1 - <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=ppZhCKE7A5I>
 - Mastectomy Recovery Yoga Week 2 & 3 - https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=hoD8lly_8eE
 - Mastectomy Recovery Week 4-6 - <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=QaDVWaR1qfw>

- Breast cancer exercises (top 8 stretches) - https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=wRd_FtQvoiM
- Gentle Mobility Flow Exercises After Breast Cancer Surgery or Radiation: For Tightness and Pain - <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=FP-NnyJ4DIA>
- Post Breast Surgery Yoga with Dr. Rashmi Vaidya - <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=GmpmOTBzxxA>

Further down the line (6 weeks+)

- Bio-oil or silicone strips
- Scar massage - <https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Scar-scar-massage.pdf>
- Optional: couch to 5k (recover your physical fitness and muscle condition)
- Optional: Massage gun (to help break down large areas of subdermal scar tissue)