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# Now What? A Patient's Guide To Recovery After Mastectomy



## Synopsis

In 2008, Amy Curran Baker was diagnosed with invasive ductal carcinoma and opted for bilateral mastectomy with Direct to Implant Reconstruction. Within three weeks of being diagnosed she had a mastectomy and was on the road to recovery. But after the surgery she had a lot of questions, the same that most women will have. As an Occupational Therapist, she knew some of the answers from her own clinical training and experience. But many more came from speaking with other women who had undergone mastectomies, from researching message boards, and a little bit of luck. Now she and her co-authors have brought together the answers to the questions that women face in chapters that cover everything from how to prepare for going to the hospital to when you come home Amy and her co-authors answer: Why am I so tired all the time? What about these drains? Should I worry about Lymphedema? What possible complications should I be aware of? And more Although everyone's experience is slightly different depending upon one's individual choice: mastectomy alone or mastectomy with reconstruction; the majority of the information applies to all women who had a mastectomy. Amy and her co-authors include chapters on key issues all women face including wound management, scar massage, dressing and bathing, emotional recovery, and more. And although mastectomy is frightening, the authors make clear that today's procedure is not what it used to be. Now What? is the first resource to provide all the information that women need after mastectomy and breast reconstruction surgery so that they can focus on what matters most: healing and staying well. Contents: Introduction, 1. Making the Difficult Decisions, 2. Now What?, 3. After-care, Recovery and Complications, 4. Voices, 5. The Forms You Will Need

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The open dialogue [in this book] explores the multiple facets of complete healing and heightens the reality that no two journeys are the same. The upbeat and reassuring content is a must read for those considering a mastectomy." - Nancy Sokolowski, RN, Breast Health Specialist, Co-author: The Breast Cancer Companion: A Guide for the Newly Diagnosed "...an immensely helpful, supportive, realistic and comprehensive book about how to prepare for and what to expect after mastectomy. Ã Â Now What? is an invaluable resource for the breast cancer patient who wants to be prepared and empowered." CAPHIS - Consumer Newsletter of the Medical Library Association. "When facing mastectomy, you can never ask too many questions, you can only regret not pushing for more details ahead of time. While this is true, you also need true and thorough answers. In Amy Curran Baker's book you find these answers " -Ingrid Kollak, RN, PhD, Co-author: Yoga and Breast Cancer "Now What? details all you need to know about what to expect when having a mastectomy. From surgery to recovery, this easy to read, practical resource provides a wealth of information from people who have been there and care enough to share. Now What? is an invaluable resource." -Katherine Quinn, Executive Director, Support Connection, Breast and Ovarian Cancer Support Services

The open dialogue [in this book] explores the multiple facets of complete healing and heightens the reality that no two journeys are the same. The upbeat and reassuring content is a must read for those considering a mastectomy." - Nancy Sokolowski, RN, Breast Health Specialist, Co-author: The Breast Cancer Companion: A Guide for the Newly Diagnosed "...an immensely helpful, supportive, realistic and comprehensive book about how to prepare for and what to expect after mastectomy. Now What? is an invaluable resource for the breast cancer patient who wants to be prepared and empowered." CAPHIS - Consumer Newsletter of the Medical Library Association. "When facing mastectomy, you can never ask too many questions, you can only regret not pushing for more details ahead of time. While this is true, you also need true and thorough answers. In Amy Curran Baker's book you find these answers " -Ingrid Kollak, RN, PhD, Co-author: Yoga and Breast Cancer "Now What? details all you need to know about what to expect when having a mastectomy. From surgery to recovery, this easy to read, practical resource provides a wealth of information from people who have been there and care enough to share. Now What? is an invaluable resource." -Katherine Quinn, Executive Director, Support Connection, Breast and Ovarian Cancer Support Services "...a good book-well researched,

well thought-out and useful. Tons of practical useful tips...bringing up things you should think about ahead of time, and tips to make the recovery go a little easier. This is a great book."-Cancervictory.com "As a Certified Mastectomy Fitter, I often work with women that have gone through a Mastectomy. This book gave me a greater understanding of the personal and medical challenges they face on a daily basis. Clinical terms are explained in a comfortable, easy manner and it is full of suggestions to ease the healing process. Amy Curran Baker does an excellent job portraying life dealing with breast cancer. I would recommend this book for both mastectomy patients and their caregivers. Good for CFM's to read about recovery from a patient's point of view. This is a great guide for patients! It clearly and concisely explains many aspects of the mastectomy and post mastectomy processes and the helpful review of clinical terms will help patients more effectively communicate with their healthcare team."-Jeanine Doty RN, CPO, Operations Department, Active Life, Inc. "...an immensely helpful, supportive, realistic and comprehensive book about how to prepare for and what to expect after mastectomy. Curran Baker's writing is honest, clear, empathetic and personable; she covers the full spectrum of experiences on topics like drain management and pain, since every patient is unique. Now What? is an invaluable resource for the breast cancer patient who wants to be prepared and empowered."-CAPHIS, Consumer Newsletter of the Medical Library Association "When facing mastectomy, you can never ask too many questions, you can only regret not pushing for more details ahead of time. While this is true, you also need true and thorough answers. In Amy Curran Baker's book you find these answers." -Ingrid Kollak, RN, PhD, Co-author: Yoga and Breast Cancer --Nancy Sokolowski, RN, Breast Health Specialist, Co-author: The Breast Cancer Companion: A Guide for the Newly Diagnosed

Amy Curran Baker, MA, OTR/L has over 14 years experience as an occupational therapist. In 2008 she was diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent a mastectomy with reconstruction. Amy is an active breast cancer awareness advocate having participated in print and media interviews on the subject of hereditary breast cancer and reconstruction options. Linda Curran, NP, has practiced for nine years as a board certified Advanced Practice Registered Nurse specializing in women's health. Her professional interests include breast cancer screenings, BRCA, and other hereditary cancer syndromes. She has been previously published in the nursing journal Lifelines and is employed at a community health center in West Oahu, Hawaii. MaryBeth Curran Brown, RN, is a veteran nurse with nearly 20 years of experience. Ms. Brown has treated patients in intensive care and during all stages of post-surgical recovery. Her professional interests include oncology nursing, wound care,

and providing nursing care to rural populations.

This is an excellent guide geared towards the patient's perspective of the process. It contains practical advice. As someone who likes to be thoroughly prepared for any event, this book helped me to feel more in control of my situation. I was able to order supplies advance as well as get my room set up for my return from the hospital. Very well written and easily accessible. I would recommend this book to anyone facing a mastectomy.

Very informative. I am a BRCA 1 carrier and have a lot of questions and decisions to make. This book showed me there are options and different places to go for support. Definitely recommend!

This book is very good for anyone in this situation. It's pretty straight forward and gives you a lot of good advise before your surgery. Things that doctors forget or just don't tell you because they're busy with other things. This book helped me a lot. I would recommend this. My hope is that no one will need it as I did.

I love this book, more than any of the other breast cancer books I bought. So many great tips in here, that I even bought a copy for someone else having a mastectomy! HIGHLY recommend this book for any woman having to prepare for this difficult journey. I have sections highlighted, pages marked to review and I continue to go back to it. This was in my bag when I went to the hospital for my bilateal mastectomy 2 months ago and I'm really grateful I had this to help me prep!!

Excellent book. Lots of valuable information. I purchased this for a family member who is scheduled for bilateral mastectomy in several weeks. I wish I had this book when I went through my own bilateral mastectomy last year. Highly recommend this book for anyone needing to be prepared for breast cancer surgeries.

I am an occupational therapist who works with breast cancer survivors. This book is filled with practical and useful information that no one tells you after undergoing breast cancer surgery and treatment. Since the author is a survivor as well as an OT, she knew what would be important for patients to know on a practical level. This book is a must have if someone you know has been recently diagnosed with breast cancer.

This book is a practical guide to prepare for what is to come in treating the breast cancer survivor. It delineates the needful things for home, the hospital and the post hospital experience. I would caution the reader to remember that each Doctor wants the patient to follow a specific protocol and if any book suggests a differing protocol, then always ask the doctor to explain why he/she is asking you the patient to follow certain restrictions or not. Use this book as a great guideline to prepare.

Very helpful guide through a difficult time for women. I found this very helpful in my journey through surgery and after.

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