

## THE IMPORTANCE OF BREAST PROSTHESES



Wearing weighted silicone breast prostheses following a mastectomy is medically necessary to maintain a proper weight and shape symmetry of the chest and back. Maintenance of proper weight and shape is important for proper alignment of the spine, shoulders and chest which will help minimise and prevent posture problems and neck and back problems.

### Some Questions you may be asked.....

- Q. What is a breast form and why do I need to wear one?**
- A. A breast form is designed to be worn externally and to closely resemble the natural appearance, feel and weight of a breast. Physically, a breast form restores a feminine shape and feeling of balance. Psychologically, wearing a breast form helps restore self-confidence.
- Q. How soon after surgery can I wear a breast form?**
- A. A few days after surgery she can wear a temporary light fibre-filled breast form which restores shape, is lightweight and will minimize irritation to sensitive tissue. Six to eight weeks after surgery, she can be fitted with a permanent silicone breast form.
- Q. Why should I wear a silicone breast form?**
- A. Silicone breast forms offer many advantages over other types of breast forms. They are designed to closely resemble the natural breast in terms of weight, appearance and texture. Silicone breast forms move very much like a natural breast and adapt to the natural temperature of the body.

**Q. Do I need to wear a different bra and how do I choose the right one?**

A. Mastectomy bras come with a pocket sewn into the bra cup to support and hold the breast form in place. It is important that her mastectomy bra fits correctly and offers sufficient support for the weight of her breast form. A professional fitting will help determine the correct size if she is unsure of her size.

**Q. How do I know which bra and breast form are right for me?**

A. The nature of her body and her surgery, together with the wide range of styles and sizes available, mean a professional fitting is very important. An experienced and trained fitter will help choose the correct size and shape of breast form. A breast form should be comfortable and match the remaining breast in terms of shape and size.

**Q. How do I care for my breast form and how long will it last?**

A. A breast form should be cleaned with warm water and a mild soap and dried gently after use. When not in use, the breast form should be stored in its box to maintain the shape of the form and prevent accidental damage. If the prosthesis is treated as directed, it is very durable, but care should be taken when handling sharp objects to prevent the outer film of the breast form from being punctured or damaged. Your prosthesis should last up to 5 years but if a woman gains or loses weight then she may require a different size prosthesis and bra. It is recommended to be refitted every two years to check your bra and prosthesis still fit correctly.

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