

BREAST CANCER PATIENT EQUITY ACT POLICY GUIDE

Establishing Medicare Coverage for Custom Breast Prostheses 116th Congress, S.562/H.R.1370

Issue Summary

Today, if a woman has mastectomy surgery to remove or prevent breast cancer, her options after surgery can be fairly limited. After surgery, a woman's chest wall is entirely different than before. With Medicare covering "off-the-shelf" prostheses and reconstructive surgery, she has options to choose from. However, these are not all of the options she should have, and they are not without their drawbacks.

Off-the-shelf prosthesis

- Finding the right symmetry and skin tone to match the remaining breast is not always possible
- Irregular chest walls can make fitting difficult
- Requires a pocketed mastectomy bra

Reconstructive surgery

- Not everyone is a good candidate
- Often requires multiple surgeries

While these options work for many women, there are some who would prefer a custom breast prosthesis, the missing option. The problem is Medicare doesn't cover custom breast prostheses. **In fact, the breast is one of the only custom prosthetic body parts that is not covered by Medicare. Legislation is needed for Medicare** to include this as a covered benefit.

The Difference Between Custom and Off-the-shelf Prostheses

Off-the-shelf Breast Prostheses

Women are unique and come in all shapes and sizes. Off-the-shelf prostheses may not work the same for everyone.

- Can shift
- Symmetry isn't always possible
- May not match skin tone
- Requires a pocketed mastectomy bra



Custom Breast Prostheses

Certified mastectomy fitters can use a computer or tablet to scan a patient's chest wall to meet the exact shape of a patient, perfectly fitting her chest wall:

- Minimizes shifting of the form
- Gives patients symmetry
- Matches skin tone



Action Item

In order to establish custom breast prostheses as a Medicare-covered benefit, Congress must pass legislation. Stakeholders and patient advocacy groups are currently working to gain sponsors for the "**Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act**" in both chambers to increase breast replacement options that breast cancer survivors have after undergoing mastectomy surgery. This legislation will allow Medicare to establish coverage for this benefit to address the unique needs of women who want to choose custom prostheses over the other two breast replacement options already covered by Medicare.

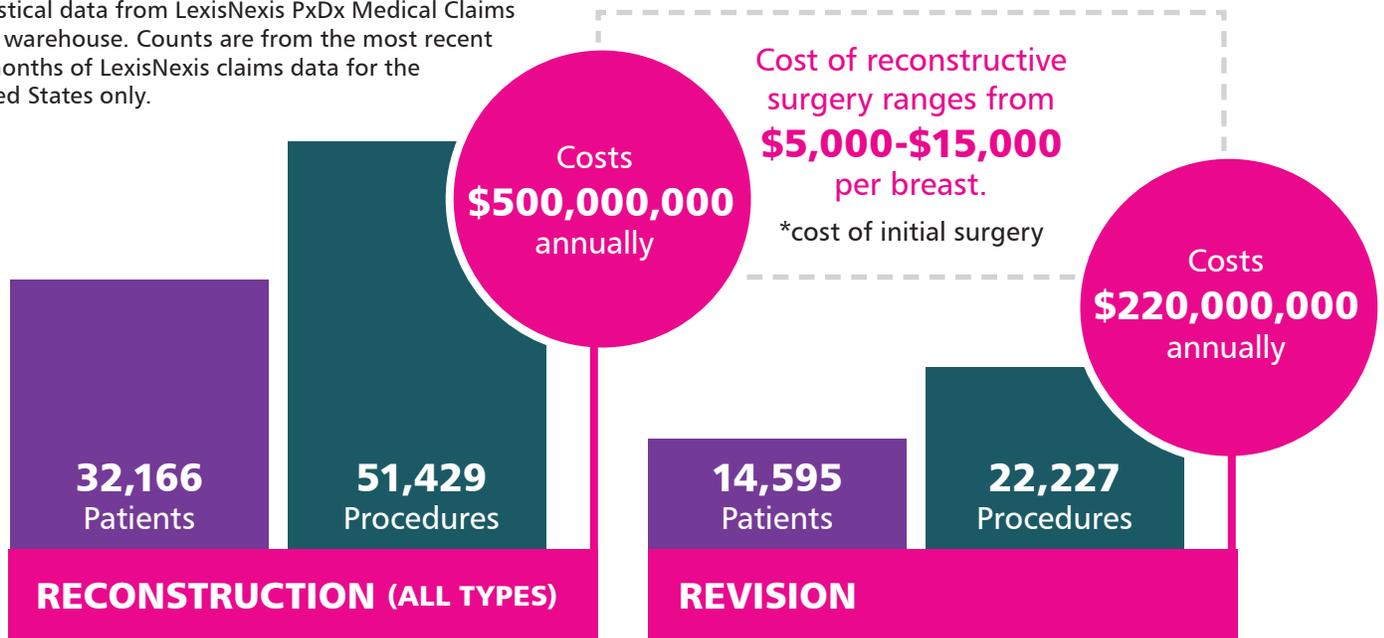
With one in eight U.S. women developing breast cancer over their lifetime, it is difficult to find someone who does not know a woman impacted by this terrible disease. Offering this option of care will give women all of the options after surviving breast cancer. **Let her decide** what's right for her.

MASTECTOMY SURGERY DATA

It is estimated there will be 268,600 women diagnosed with invasive breast cancer in the United States in 2019. Approximately 144,000 of those women will undergo mastectomy surgery. Below is information from LexisNexis, a national claim clearinghouse.

Cost of Breast Reconstruction

Statistical data from LexisNexis PxDx Medical Claims data warehouse. Counts are from the most recent 12 months of LexisNexis claims data for the United States only.



Note: Data may also include patients who are undergoing mastopexy (i.e., a breast lift). Patients who choose breast reconstruction surgery will face more than one surgery, along with the additional risks.

The Women's Health and Cancer Right Act of 1998 requires U.S. health insurers and self-insured plans that cover mastectomy to also cover reconstruction and prostheses.



Risks include problems with anesthesia, bleeding, clots, fluid build-up, infection, wound healing problems, extreme fatigue, need for more surgery, problems with the implant, and uneven breasts.



Depending on the type of surgery, whether it's an implant or flap surgery, patients may have to go under the knife multiple times, and recovery can take weeks or even months.



Breast revision surgeries are surgical procedures that intend to remove, correct, or replace a reconstructed breast.

Source: American Cancer Society, American Society of Plastic Surgeons

BREAST REPLACEMENT OPTIONS

Women who seek breast replacement after mastectomy deserve to have all the options available, recognizing that some women choose to go flat. The “good” and “best” options for breast replacement are covered by Medicare, but “better” is not. Stakeholders and patient advocacy groups are currently working to gain sponsors for the “Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act” to provide women with the “better” option. Let her decide what’s right for her.

	GOOD OPTION	BETTER OPTION	BEST OPTION
DESCRIPTION	Off-the-shelf Prosthesis, L8030 Breast Prosthesis Without Adhesive	Custom Breast Prosthesis, L8035	Reconstructive Surgery
COVERED BY MEDICARE	✓	✗	✓
COST PER BREAST	\$312.04 - \$416.05 (Based on 01/19 CMS DMEPOS Fee Schedule)	\$3,255.87- \$4,341.16 (Based on 01/19 CMS DMEPOS Fee Schedule)	\$5,000 - \$15,000 (Initial surgery only)
REQUIRES ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES	✗	✗	✓ 2-4 additional surgeries
RISK OF COMPLICATIONS EG: INFECTION	✗	✗	✓
RECOVERY TIME	None, once mastectomy surgery site is healed, the breast prosthesis can be used.	None, once mastectomy surgery site is healed, the custom breast prosthesis can be used.	Varies depending on procedure; multiple surgeries required; lengthy recovery
TAILORED TO RESTORE THE PATIENT PROFILE	✗	✓	✓