

» GLOSSARY OF CANCER-RELATED SURGERIES

BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT: A treatment that restores blood-forming stem cells that have been destroyed by high doses of chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy. The bone marrow may come from the patient or a donor.

COLECTOMY: Surgical removal of all (total) or part (e.g., partial colectomy or hemicolectomy) of the colon

COLOSTOMY: An opening in the abdomen for getting rid of body waste. A colostomy is sometimes needed after surgery for cancer of the rectum.

DISSECTION: Surgery to divide, separate, or remove tissues

LOCAL EXCISION: Surgery to remove small superficial (surface) cancers or polyps

LUMPECTOMY: Surgery to remove a breast tumor and a small amount of surrounding normal tissue

MASTECTOMY: Surgery to remove all or part of the breast and sometimes other tissue

MODIFIED RADICAL MASTECTOMY: A type of surgery that removes the breast, skin, nipple, areola (area surrounding the nipple of the breast), and most of the axillary (underarm) lymph nodes on the same side, leaving the chest muscles intact

OOPHORECTOMY: Surgery to remove one or both ovaries

ORCHIECTOMY: Surgery to remove the testicles

PANCREATECTOMY: Surgery to remove the pancreas

PARTIAL OR SEGMENTAL MASTECTOMY: A type of surgery that removes less than the whole breast, taking only the part of the breast in which the cancer occurs and a margin of healthy breast tissue surrounding the tumor

PELVIC EXENTERATION: Surgery to remove the organs found in the pelvis

PNEUMONECTOMY: Surgery to remove a lung

POLYPECTOMY: Surgery to remove a polyp

PROPHYLACTIC MASTECTOMY: A mastectomy done before any evidence of cancer can be found, for the purpose of preventing cancer. This is usually done in only special cases, for example, for women who have a very high risk of developing breast cancer.

PROSTATECTOMY: Surgical removal of all or part of the prostate gland

QUADRANTECTOMY: A partial mastectomy in which the quarter of the breast that contains a tumor is removed

RADICAL PROSTATECTOMY: Surgery to remove the entire prostate gland, the seminal vesicles (sac containing semen), and nearby tissue

RESECTION: Surgery to remove part or all of an organ or other structure

SIMPLE MASTECTOMY OR TOTAL MASTECTOMY: A type of breast cancer surgery that removes only the breast and areola (area surrounding the nipple of the breast)

STEREOTACTIC NEEDLE BIOPSY: A method of needle biopsy that is useful in some cases in which calcifications or a mass can be seen on mammogram but cannot be found by touch. A computer maps the location of the mass to guide the placement of the needle.

SURGICAL BIOPSY: Removal of tissues via open surgery for examination under the microscope to find out if they contain cancer cells

TRACHEOSTOMY: Surgery to create an opening of the trachea through the neck

TRANSVERSE RECTUS ABDOMINIS MUSCLE FLAP PROCEDURE (TRAM OR MUSCLE FLAP PROCEDURE): A method of breast reconstruction in which tissue from the lower abdominal wall is moved up to the chest to simulate a breast mound. An implant is usually not needed.

UROSTOMY: Surgery to divert urine through a new passage and then through an opening in the abdomen (stoma). In a continent urostomy, the urine is stored inside the body and drained a few times a day through a tube placed in the stoma.

WIRE LOCALIZATION: A method used during a surgical breast biopsy when the lump is hard to find or when there is an area that looks suspect on the x-ray. A thin, hollow needle is placed into the breast and x-rays are taken to guide the needle to the area in question. A fine wire is inserted through the center of the needle. A small hook at the end of the wire keeps it in place. The hollow needle is then removed, and the surgeon uses the path of the wire as a guide to find the abnormal area to be removed.