



My Doctor Knows Dr Ng Char Hong

LIVING WITH CONFIDENCE AFTER BREAST CANCER

BREAST cancer is the most common cancer among women in Malaysia.

In Malaysia, breast cancer is prevalent in women in their 40s to 50s – with increasing risk as they age – which is why breast cancer awareness is important among women in this age group.

Many women are afraid of receiving a diagnosis of breast cancer. The majority of them still think that such a diagnosis equates to them losing their breast.

The emerging numbers of breast oncoplastic surgeons have significantly changed the surgical management of breast cancer. These surgeons use a collaboration of breast cancer tumour removal and plastic surgery techniques – hence the term “oncoplastic surgery”.

With this integrated technique, they are able to remove bigger tumours in a smaller breast while still maintaining the shape and size of the breast with minimal defects.

Breast conserving surgery with a combination of radiotherapy is the preferred technique among surgeons because it is not only cosmetically pleasing and maintains the body's balance, it is also beneficial to the patient's mental, emotional and sexual health.

If breast conservation is out of the question due to the more widespread growth of the disease in the breast, a mastectomy – removal of the whole breast with breast reconstruction – will be the preferred

Conserving surgery can maintain the shape and size of breast



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choice.

Breast reconstruction is an operation to replace tissue during a mastectomy.

The aim is to match the remaining natural breast tissue as closely as possible by creating a breast “mould” using an implant, with the patient's own tissues from the fat and muscle of her back or abdomen, or a combination of both.

This would result in the patient diagnosed with breast cancer having a breast “mould” that will best resemble her natural breast silhouette in clothes.

Dr Ng Char Hong is a consultant breast surgeon at Subang Jaya Medical Centre.



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