



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®



THE PLASTIC SURGERY
FOUNDATION™

444 East Algonquin Road • Arlington Heights, IL 60005-4664
847-228-9900 • www.plasticsurgery.org

ASPS FACT SHEET

Breast Cancer Patient Education Act of 2015

In 2015, an estimated 231,840 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed among women in the United States¹.

Less than half of all women requiring a mastectomy are currently offered breast reconstruction surgery².

Overall rate of breast reconstruction remains well below 25% despite the Women's Health and Cancer Right's Act of 1998, which requires health plans that offer breast cancer coverage to also provide for breast reconstruction and prostheses.³

African American and Hispanic women have a lower likelihood of breast reconstruction, as well as patients who live in nonmetropolitan areas, have less education and are of lower economic means, respectively.⁴

While there is no consensus as to why women are not informed of their potential care options post-mastectomy, a 2009 study conducted by the University of Michigan and Dana Farber determined that women did not undergo breast reconstruction because 1) they were not informed of their options and 2) they were not referred to a breast reconstruction surgeon.

Discussions about breast reconstruction with the patient's general surgeon strongly influence the patient's surgical treatment choices.⁵

¹ The American Cancer Society, 2015

² Potter S, Mills N, Cawthorn S, Wilson S, Blazeby J. Exploring inequalities in access to care and the provision of choice to women seeking breast reconstruction surgery: a qualitative study. *Br J Cancer*. 2013 Sep 3.

³ Agarwal, Shailesh, Lisa Pappas, Leigh Neumayer, and Jayant Agarwal. "An Analysis of Immediate Postmastectomy Breast Reconstruction Frequency Using the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Database." *The Breast Journal* 17.4 (2011): 352-58. Print.

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⁵ Alderman, Amy K., Sarah T. Hawley, Jennifer Waljee, Mahasin Mujahid, Monica Morrow, and Steven J. Katz. "Understanding the Impact of Breast Reconstruction on the Surgical Decision-making Process for Breast Cancer." *Cancer* (2007): 489-94. Wiley InterScience. Web. 9 July 2015. <www.interscience.wiley.com>.