

# How do I have a Mastectomy and Chest Reconstruction?

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The Comprehensive Gender Services Program (CGSP) uses the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care guidelines when referring you for care relating to gender dysphoria. The process described in this handout helps us make sure that we follow the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines and provide safe and effective care.

Mastectomy and chest reconstruction is a surgery that removes the breasts and creates a flatter chest. In order to have this surgery, you will need **1 referral letter** from a licensed mental health provider that addresses the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines.

## **What are my next steps to have a mastectomy and chest reconstruction?**

1. Meet with your licensed mental health provider to obtain a referral letter and sign a Release of Information Form for them.
  - **Referral Letter:**
    - Your letter writer must be a licensed mental health provider willing and able to write a referral letter for you to undergo mastectomy.
    - You will need to meet with your provider face-to-face (in-person).
    - If your letter writer has a limited license, their fully licensed supervisor will need to cosign their letter.
  - **Release of Information Form:**
    - You should receive a copy of the Release form with along with this handout. If you need a copy of the form, please contact our office.

- You will fill out this form for your provider and send your completed form back to us.
  - When you sign this form, you give us your permission to review your provider's referral letter and contact them if necessary.
  - We **cannot** review your referral letter until we have this form.
2. Make sure your provider sends their referral letter directly to our office (see instructions below).
  3. Read through the "*What to Expect: Mastectomy*" packet that you received with this handout. This provides more information on the process from consultation appointment to surgery and recovery.
  4. Contact our office by phone or email if you have any questions or concerns about the letter-writing or letter-reviewing process.

### **How do I send my Release of Information Form to the CGSP office?**

You should send your form to us in one of the following ways:

**Mail:** Michigan Medicine - CGSP  
2025 Traverwood Dr. Suite A1  
Ann Arbor, MI, 48105

**Fax:** (734) 998-2152

**Email:** [genderservices@med.umich.edu](mailto:genderservices@med.umich.edu)

- If you use email to send the Release of Information form, you **must** send us a scanned image of the form. We **cannot** accept a photograph of the form.
- Please **do not** send the Release form directly to the Health Information Management office (the contact information listed on the form itself) as this will cause delays the review process. **Only** send the Release form directly to CGSP using the contact information above.
- Your provider will send the referral letter to our office in the same way.

## **What do you do with my referral letter once you receive it?**

Once we receive your referral letter, we will review it within 10 business days. This review makes sure that the referral letter addresses the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines.

There are 2 ways that we can respond once we have reviewed your referral letter:

1. We will contact your letter writer if the referral letter **does not** address the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines or if we have questions about the referral letter. Your letter writer **must** discuss the referral letter with our office so that they can update the referral letter as needed.
2. We will refer you to Plastic Surgery when we have a complete referral letter for you that addresses the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines.

## **What happens when you refer me to Plastic Surgery?**

When Plastic Surgery receives the referral from our office, they will schedule you for a consultation appointment with a surgeon. The Plastic Surgery office will contact you within 3 weeks of receiving the referral to schedule this appointment.

### **Before scheduling your consultation appointment:**

You **must** be smoke-free and nicotine-free for **2 months** before you can schedule your consultation appointment.

- You **must** stop using **all** nicotine containing products (for example: cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vape pens, nicotine patches, nicotine gum, and chewing tobacco).
- You **must** stop smoking and vaping marijuana.

- You **may** continue to use marijuana products that are **not** smoked or breathed in.

**At the consultation appointment, you will:**

- Talk to your surgeon to determine if you are a good candidate for surgery.
- Ask your surgeon questions about the proposed surgery.
- Talk with your surgery scheduler about your next steps, including self-pay costs.

**Please note:** You will **not** schedule your surgery date at the consultation appointment. You will receive your surgery date approximately 2-3 months before that surgery date.

Plastic Surgery will review all of these steps in depth with you at your consultation appointment.

**Will my insurance plan cover mastectomy and chest reconstruction surgery?**

Please be advised that currently, no insurance companies are covering this surgery for people under 18. If a person would like this surgery before age 18, they will **pay out-of-pocket**. If you would like more information on the out-of-pocket pricing prior to the consultation appointment, please let us know.

**Who do I contact if I have questions about this process or my referral letter?**

You can contact us our office by phone or email.

**Phone:** (734) 998-2150

**Email:** [genderservices@med.umich.edu](mailto:genderservices@med.umich.edu)

Comprehensive Gender Services Program  
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Our office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm.

We can also help your provider with their referral letter if they have any questions about the letter writing process and how they can make sure that the referral letter addresses the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines.

### **How can I keep track of this process?**

Use our Mastectomy and Chest Reconstruction Checklist.

- I have met with my provider face-to-face (in-person).
- I have talked to my provider about how to write and send my referral letter to CGSP.
- I have completed a Release of Information form and returned it to CGSP.
- I have received a call or email from CGSP letting me know that they have received my referral letter.
- I have received a call from CGSP letting me know that they made the referral to Plastic Surgery.
- I have received a call from Plastic Surgery to schedule my consultation appointment.

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