

# Breast cancer patients have unrelated plastic surgery after reconstruction

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Women who've had a mastectomy sometimes seek procedures such as facelifts, study says.

(HealthDay)—Some breast cancer patients who've had breast reconstruction after mastectomy also undergo cosmetic surgery in an effort to further boost their self-image and self-esteem, according to a new study.

Researchers looked at 1,214 women who had breast reconstruction between 2005 and 2012, and found that 113 of them later had [cosmetic procedures](#). Of those, 42 responded to a survey asking them why they decided to have procedures such as liposuction (33 percent), a facelift (19 percent), and eyelid surgery (12 percent).

The most common reason given by the women for having [cosmetic surgery](#) was the desire to improve their self-image (62 percent), with some of them saying they felt more self-conscious about their

appearance after breast reconstruction, according to the study to be presented Sunday at the annual meeting of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), in San Diego.

Most of the women said they had a higher level of body image satisfaction after cosmetic surgery, but 28 percent said they did not experience an improvement.

Because this study was presented at a medical meeting, the data and conclusions should be viewed as preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

"Breast reconstruction is transformative in many ways. When a woman faces the prospect of losing a breast, one of the most gratifying things [plastic surgeons](#) can offer is the ability to help reconstruct the breast and possibly improve her appearance and restore her self-confidence," study co-author Dr. Liza Wu said in an ASPS news release.

Wu said it's important to note that many [women](#) who have [breast reconstruction](#) do not go on to have cosmetic procedures. "But for those that deem it an appropriate choice, cosmetic surgery can improve body image satisfaction and may help to further meet their needs and expectations," she said.

**More information:** The U.S. National Cancer Institute has more about [breast reconstruction after mastectomy](#).

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