# Breast Conservation

Women who had breast-conserving surgery rather than mastectomy report better quality of life.

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Choosing breast-conserving surgery instead of mastectomy could mean better quality of life, according to a study presented at the 2018 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium.

Although around three fourths of women are eligible for breast-conserving surgery, a growing number opt for bilateral mastectomy, or complete removal of both breasts, according to Laura Dominici, MD, of Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center in Boston.

Dominici's team looked at postsurgery outcomes among 560 young women (under age 40) diagnosed with breast cancer. About 30 percent had breast-conserving surgery, about 20 percent had unilateral mastectomies and about half had bilateral mastectomies; most also had reconstructive surgery.

Using a survey called BREAST-Q, the researchers found that women who had mastectomies reported poorer psychosocial and sexual well-being than those who chose breast-conserving surgery.

"Women are becoming increasingly involved in the decision-making process, so we must make sure they have as much information as possible about long-term outcomes, including quality of life," Dominici says.

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