



**PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST VISIT WITH
YOUR BREAST SURGEON: A CHECKLIST FOR PATIENTS**



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Facing a diagnosis of breast cancer can be a stressful experience for patients. At the Center for Breast Care at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center, our goal is to help make your experience as informative and comfortable as possible. To help guide you, we are providing you with a checklist of things to bring to your appointment with your surgeon.



Important information for your evaluation:

- Your personal and family health history
- Identification and insurance card
- Your medical history, including surgeries or procedures you may have undergone
- Operative reports
- All X-rays and CDs
- Pathology reports and slides (actual glass slides)
- A list of specific questions you want to go over with your physician

Questions to ask your doctor:

- What is the meaning of my diagnosis? What information do we currently have and do we still need to obtain more information?
- Are there alternatives for treatment?
- What are the different surgical options?
- What are the differences in risks and benefits of the options?
- How do these options have an impact on recovery?
- Do I need other tests or consultations before surgery?
- Are there other treatments I might need, i.e. radiation or chemotherapy?
- How involved is the surgical procedure? What will my physical limitations be following surgery?
- Who else will be involved in my surgery?
- What can I expect, physically, will take place during my procedure?
- How long do you anticipate I will be in the hospital?
- Where in the hospital will I do my recovery? Will I need to be in the ICU?
- How long with the recovery period be after I am discharged?
- When can I resume normal activities?
- When can I go back to work?