

Questions I wanted to ask...

Meeting the surgeon

Dear patient,

In preparation for an appointment with **the surgeon**, we recommend that you come equipped with questions you think are important to ask at that meeting.

It is important that you receive all the information in a clear and structured manner.

Below are several suggested questions for which you may want to ask at your meeting. Write them down in an order of importance, and if there is not enough time to ask them all, you may schedule another meeting.

The surgery itself

- What kind of surgery is recommended for me: a full or a partial mastectomy?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each surgery?
- When will the surgery be scheduled? How urgent is it?
- How long will the surgery take?
- What type of anaesthesia will be used?
- What is the sentinel lymph node? Is it advisable to only remove that node or must all axillary nodes be removed?
- Is there a way to ensure the margins are clean, which would reduce the need for further surgery?
- What must be prepared before the surgery? (e.g., do I need to have a customized bra?)
- Will a plastic surgeon attend the surgery?

Side effects of surgery

- Will I have any swelling in my arm after surgery, and if so, what should I do?
- What are the possible post-op functional limitations I might experience in my daily routine? Will there be pain?
- What are the possible complications and how can I manage them?
- Will any fluid drain remain after the surgery? If so, for how long?
- What issues must I report? And to whom?
- How is the surgical scar to be taken care of?

Keeping up your routine:

- Should I expect any changes in my physical capabilities?
- Will anything change in my appearance?
- Will I need physiotherapy or perform exercises?
- If so, when do I begin and what are the required exercises?
- In addition to the oncology follow-up, will there be a follow-up by the surgeon and how often?
- When can I expect to be fully functional again?
- Who can I turn to in case of a problem/question before/after the surgery?
- Who can I turn to in with urgent or nonurgent questions, during or outside office hours?