

with women that smoke. . . . , I'm a non-smoker now, I was a smoker then and that kind of made the difference in determining where I would have this done. ... it's called the free tram flap . . . , where they, they make an incision in your lower abdomen and then they take the muscle on the opposite breast and kind of weave it through and re-build, and I wasn't able to have that done because of the previous gall bladder surgery, because I smoked, so this doctor did the same tram-flap but what's called free tram-flap where portions of the muscle and tissue is actually removed from the body and placed and reconstructed. . . . It's very delicate work and I feel that he did a really wonderful job. I'm not disappointed.

**Table 4. OPERATION CHOICES FOR BREAST RECONSTRUCTION**

Description	Comments
<p><b>Expander</b>            Can be of several types. Empty silicone sack or double envelope with silicone layer and empty sack implanted under skin and muscle, gradually filled with saline (saltwater) solution through a valve over a period of weeks, stretching skin. Local or general anesthesia. Inpatient or outpatient. Surgery takes 1 to 2 hours.</p>	<p>Most common type of reconstruction. Provides greatest flexibility in breast size. Requires additional office visits (15 to 30 minutes) to add saltwater solution to stretch skin. May be uncomfortable for some women. Can have problems with valve. Another operation often needed to convert expander to permanent implant.</p>