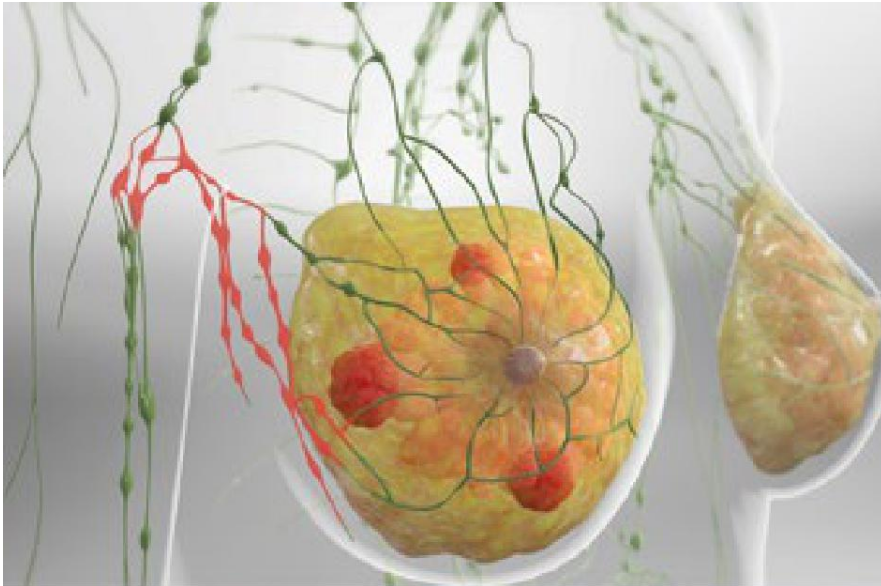




Axillary Lymph Node Dissection (ALND)



Overview

When you have breast cancer, there's a danger it can spread through your body. If it does spread, it will often move through the lymph nodes in your underarm area. This procedure removes these lymph nodes. We do it to learn more about your cancer. It can also keep your cancer from spreading.

Removing the lymph nodes

How is it done? You're asleep for the surgery. We may do it at the same time as a mastectomy (a surgery to remove a cancerous breast). To reach the lymph nodes, we make an incision under your arm. Then, we remove anywhere from 10 to 40 lymph nodes. The number we take depends on your needs.

Draining the wound

Finally, we place a drain in the area and close the incision. The drain will stay in place as you recover. Follow your care instructions as you heal.

Examining the lymph nodes

In the following days, we'll study the lymph nodes in the lab with a microscope. Your doctor will contact you soon to let you know the results. If you need further treatment, your doctor will create a care plan that's right for you.