



# ANDREW ONG

**Breast & Endocrine Surgery  
General Surgery**



Fellow of the Royal Australasian  
College of Surgeons

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## **I have had surgery for breast cancer... Now what happens?**

Dr Ong published this guide specifically for his breast cancer patients who have undergone surgery. It is designed to assist their understanding of what happens in the 1 to 6 week period immediately following surgery for breast cancer.

### **I will be discharged from hospital soon. What happens when I am discharged?**

You will be provided with a script for:

- Antibiotics (if no allergies, then this will be Keflex/Cephalexin or Resprim/Sulfamethoxazole-Trimethoprim)
- Pain killers (usually Nurofen Plus or Celebrex. Very occasionally Targin which is long-acting Oxycodone, an opioid drug).

You should have an information sheet by Dr Ong on how to care for your dressings.

If an appointment has not been already made for you, you will need to call Dr Ong's rooms and make an appointment to see him for follow-up in 1-2 weeks.

### **How soon will I know the results of the surgery and if "I am clear of cancer"?**

Patients who had surgery at the private hospital will receive an official pathology report within a week. Patients who have been discharged from the public hospital will receive an official pathology report within 2 weeks.

### **Do I need to go and see my GP after discharge?**

There is no set rule that you *have* to see your GP after discharge. Some patients like to visit their GP to check "everything's OK" or just to debrief. Some patients are happy to wait until their appointment with Dr Ong and skip a post-discharge GP visit. Any one of these options are perfectly acceptable. Do what makes you feel comfortable and safe.

### **Will I need chemotherapy / radiotherapy?**

This depends on the results of the pathology report. Dr Ong will discuss the report with you when you see him at the post-op appointment.

### **If I need chemotherapy, when will this start?**

Chemotherapy cannot commence until you have healed sufficiently from surgery. This can be anything from 3-6 weeks after surgery.

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## **If I need radiotherapy, when will this start?**

If you require radiotherapy, without needing chemotherapy, this usually starts 3-6 weeks after surgery. You will need to have healed sufficiently from surgery before radiotherapy can commence.

## **If I need both chemotherapy and radiotherapy, which will come first?**

Chemotherapy comes first, then a short "break", followed by radiotherapy.

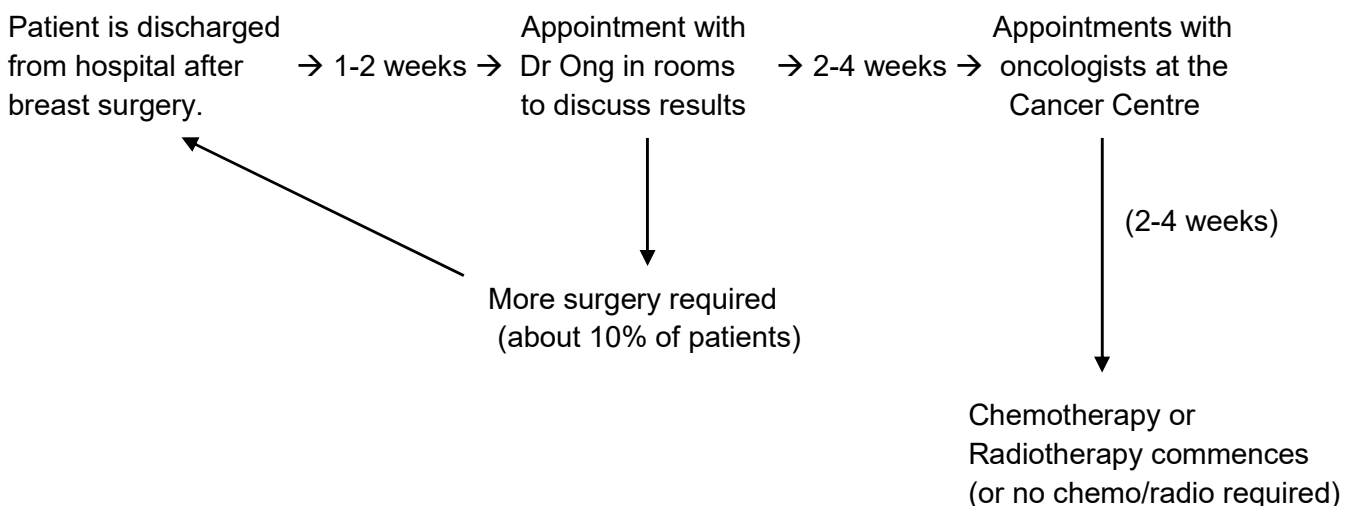
## **How do I get an appointment at the Cancer Centre to arrange chemotherapy/radiotherapy?**

There is nothing you have to do. The referrals and appointments are made by Dr Ong's rooms after Dr Ong has discussed your individual case at a multi-disciplinary meeting at the Cancer Centre. The referrals are made internally, and you will receive phone calls to inform you the appointment dates and times. A multi-disciplinary meeting is a weekly, large meeting where other surgeons, radiation doctors, chemotherapy doctors, nurses and allied health professionals get together to discuss the results of surgery and decide what is the best treatment for the patient based on their unique pathology report.

## **So, do I just wait for a call from the Cancer Centre?**

Yes, you do. If you do not hear from them in 1 or 2 weeks after meeting with Dr Ong post-op, please call Dr Ong's rooms (4610 7933) to work out the reason why. Occasionally, there can be unintended delays and there is no harm in "chasing things up" to make sure the processes are moving along.

### **Example of timelines after surgery for breast cancer:**



## **Dr ANDREW ONG**



AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND  
ENDOCRINE SURGEONS



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LET'S OPERATE WITH RESPECT

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