

Abstract

Mastectomy, Body Image Disturbance, and Nursing Strategies: A Narrative Review

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Citation: Luongo, D., Chizzoli, G., Depalma, L., Gasparini, S. M., & Pancheri, M. L. (2026). Mastectomy, body image disturbance, and nursing strategies: A narrative review. *International Journal of Health Supplements*, 1(Suppl. 2), 264. <https://doi.org/10.82051/ijhs-2026-Suppl2>

Introduction. Breast cancer represents a major global oncological challenge. Mastectomy can profoundly affect body image, identity, psychosocial well-being, and quality of life. Oncology nurses may facilitate adaptation through educational, psychosocial, and rehabilitative interventions. This review aimed to identify nursing strategies that may reduce body image disturbance following mastectomy and support women's adaptation.

Methods. A narrative literature review was conducted. MEDLINE, Embase, Emcare, PsycINFO, and Scopus were searched using predefined eligibility criteria. Two reviewers independently screened the records using Rayyan. PRISMA informed the reporting process, while the SANRA checklist was used as a methodological reference.

Results. Of the 218 records identified, seven studies were included: four randomized controlled trials, two phenomenological qualitative studies, and one quasi-experimental study. Nurses delivered interventions independently or within multidisciplinary teams, both before and after mastectomy. The reported strategies included patient education, peer-group dialogue, individualized support, and coaching-based interventions, including the Mirror Program, intended to promote self-confidence, self-esteem, and emotional well-being.

Discussion. Nursing strategies may support women in adapting to changes in body image following mastectomy, particularly through educational and psychosocial interventions. However, the small and heterogeneous evidence base limits the strength and generalizability of the conclusions. Further research should identify interventions tailored to different age groups and evaluate the potential contribution of caregivers.

Keywords: Body Image, Mastectomy, Oncology Nursing, Patient Education, Psychosocial Support

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Funding: This research received no external funding. **Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.