



The American Society of Breast Surgeons Statement on "What is a Breast Surgeon?"

A breast surgeon has a strong commitment to the evaluation and care of patients with diseases of the breast and breast malignancy. Many surgeons have expertise in breast cancer care, both with and without fellowship training. Membership in the American Society of Breast Surgeons (ASBrS) implies that a physician has a special interest in breast care. Many of the pioneers in the field of breast surgery began practicing breast surgery prior to the time that breast fellowships were available. There are innumerable surgeons who have years of surgical experience and have made a great commitment to taking care of patients with breast disease and malignancy. These surgeons have made a commitment to providing the very highest quality of care.

Membership in the ASBrS provides the opportunity for continued education through the website, annual breast conference, a breast surgery manual, and now the Breast Education Self-Assessment Program (BESAP). In addition, the ASBrS surgeon has the opportunity to receive certification in ultrasound and stereotactic breast biopsy. Finally, the Mastery of Surgery program exists to serve as a case log system as well as a method to monitor quality of care.

Only a very small percentage of the ASBrS membership have pursued additional fellowship training in breast surgery through either the Society of Surgical Oncology (SSO) accredited Breast fellowship or Surgical Oncology fellowship programs. In fact, current surgical oncology and breast fellows have been educated, trained, and certified by those experts already practicing in the field and who have forged the path for breast cancer care.

The SSO and ASBrS jointly sponsor dedicated breast oncology fellowships, which began in 2004. Through these fellowships, surgeons may pursue an additional 1-2 years of breast specific surgical training. Other surgeons may seek a SSO Surgical Oncology fellowship which also includes additional training in breast surgery. There is no current board certification specific to breast surgery.

The development of comprehensive breast centers has allowed for multimodality therapy in the evaluation and treatment of breast disease, including cancer. Within the multidisciplinary breast care team, the surgeon has emerged as an integral member of the team. A special kind of surgeon is needed to meet the emotional needs of the breast cancer patient, as well as a desire to master the technical skills required to perform the highest quality surgery. The American Society of Breast Surgeons is committed to the education and support of ALL surgeons taking a special interest in and dedicated to the care of ALL patients with diseases of the breast and breast cancer.

This statement was created by The American Society of Breast Surgeons Membership Committee and approved by the Society's Board of Directors on September 25, 2013.