

Example Lay (Plain Language) Summaries of Research Findings

1. Using our Template Lay Summary

The psychological experiences of women who underwent bilateral prophylactic mastectomy (BPM) at a young age (18-26 years)

Lancaster University

September 2024-May 2025

Dr Craig Murray & Rebecca Gardner

We would like to extend our gratitude to everyone who took part in the research study.

Public involvement played a crucial role in shaping this study. An individual with lived experience of bilateral prophylactic mastectomy (BPM) between the age of 20-26 years was involved in designing the research.

The research took place in two NHS Trust's in England and was necessary because little is known about young women's experience of BPM. The main questions we sought to answer were to understand young women's decision to have BPM and the impact this had on their life.

Seven women who had BPM surgery between the age of 20-26 years took part in the study. They did not receive any treatments / interventions during the research. No participants experienced adverse reactions/medical problems so did not need to be monitored or managed.

During the study, participants took part in an online interview. The key results showed that women wished to have BPM at a young age because they did not want to repeat upsetting childhood experience of cancer in their family. It was also convenient to have BPM young because they did not have as many responsibilities (i.e., children). Nobody regretted having BPM young and they coped well with any difficulties. Yet most women felt that professionals did not respect their decision to have BPM due to their young age. This research showed that it is important for young women asking for BPM to receive trauma-informed and person-centred care.

This research has contributed to a better understanding of BPM in young women, providing valuable insights for both patients and healthcare professionals. It has also helped researchers design better future studies.

To learn more about this study, you can contact Dr Craig Murray (c.murray@lancaster.ac.uk).

2. Writing your own freestyle lay summary based on the required content

Title: The psychological experiences of women who underwent bilateral prophylactic mastectomy (BPM) at a young age (18-26 years).

Dr Craig Murray & Rebecca Gardner.

This research was sponsored by Lancaster University.

Some women are at higher risk of getting breast cancer. Having surgery to remove their breast tissue, called bilateral prophylactic mastectomy (BPM), is the best way to lower this risk. More younger women are asking to have BPM, but most research has been on older women. We do not know much about young women's experience of BPM. Therefore, this research aimed to understand young women's decision to have BPM and the impact this had on their life. One woman who had BPM surgery at a young age helped with designing the research.

The study took place between September 2024-May 2025. Women were found by looking at patient medical records in two NHS Trust's in England. Seven women who had BPM surgery between the age of 20-26 years took part in an online interview about their experiences. The researcher then looked for patterns (known as themes) in what women said.

The study found that women wished to have BPM at a young age because they did not want to repeat upsetting childhood experience of cancer in their family. It was also convenient to have BPM young because they did not have as many responsibilities (i.e., children). Nobody regretted having BPM young and they coped well with any difficulties. Yet most women felt that professionals did not respect their decision to have BPM due to their young age. This research showed that it is important for young women asking for BPM to receive trauma-informed and person-centred care.

We would like to thank all study participants for taking part.

For more information about the study please contact Dr Craig Murray
(c.murray@lancaster.ac.uk).