

Breast Enlargement or Augmentation

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Breast augmentation, technically known as augmentation mammoplasty, is a surgical procedure to enhance the size and shape of a woman's breast. By inserting an implant behind each breast, I am able to increase a woman's bustline by one or more bra cup sizes. If you're considering breast augmentation, this will give you a basic understanding of the procedure-when it can help, how it's performed, and what results you can expect. It can't answer all of your questions, since a lot depends on your individual circumstances.



Breast implants are medical devices with a solid silicone, rubber shell. The implant shell may be filled with either saline solution (sterile salt water) or elastic silicone gel. Both saline and silicone gel breast implants are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Approval means that an implant has been rigorously researched and tested, and reviewed by an independent panel of physicians for safety.

You should be aware that breast implants are not guaranteed to last a lifetime and future surgery may be required to replace one or both implants. Regular examinations for breast health and to evaluate the condition of your implants are important whether you have chosen saline or silicone breast implants.

Breast augmentation is relatively straightforward. But as with any operation, there are risks associated with surgery and specific complications associated with this procedure. The most common problem, capsular contracture, occurs if the scar or capsule around the implant begins to tighten. This squeezing of the soft implant can cause the breast to feel hard. Capsular contracture can be treated in several ways, and sometimes requires either removal or "scoring" of the scar tissue, or perhaps removal or replacement of the implant.

As with any surgical procedure, excessive bleeding following the operation may cause some swelling and pain. If excessive bleeding continues, another operation may be needed to control the bleeding and remove the accumulated blood. A small percentage of women develop an infection around an implant. This may occur at any time, but is most often seen within a week after surgery. In some cases, the implant may need to be removed for several months until the infection clears. A new implant can then be inserted. Some women report that their nipples become oversensitive, undersensitive, or even numb. You may also notice small patches of numbness near your incisions. These symptoms usually disappear within time, but may be permanent in some patients. Breast implants do not generally interfere with a woman's ability to breast feed, or present a health hazard during pregnancy to a woman or her baby. However, pregnancy and the associated changes to a woman's body may alter the results of any breast surgery, including surgery to place breast implants. Therefore, it is important to discuss the options of breast implant surgery with me if you are interested in becoming pregnant and breast feeding in the future.

Occasionally, breast implants may break or leak. Rupture can occur as a result of injury or even from the normal compression and movement of your breast and implant, causing the man-made shell to leak. If a saline-filled implant breaks, the implant will deflate in a few hours and the salt water will be absorbed and naturally expelled by the body. If a silicone-gel filled implant leak or break, the elastic silicone gel may remain within the implant shell, or may escape into the breast implant pocket (a capsule of tissue that surrounds the implant). A leaking implant filled with silicone gel may not deflate and may not be noticeable except through imaging techniques such as an MRI. For this reason, a woman with silicone breast implants is advised to visit her plastic surgeon annually to assess that her implants are functioning well. An ultrasound exam or MRI screening can assess the condition of breast implants; after 3 years it is recommended that all silicone implants be properly screened.

Following the placement of breast implants mammography is technically more difficult. Obtaining the best possible results requires specialized techniques and additional views. You must be candid about your implants when undergoing any diagnostic breast exam. In many cases, an ultrasound exam or MRI may be recommended in addition to mammography.

The best candidates for breast augmentation are women who are looking for improvement, not perfection, in the way they look. If you're physically healthy and realistic in your expectations, you may be a good candidate.