



Breast Augmentation (Breast enlargement, augmentation mammoplasty)

What is it?

Breast augmentation is enlargement of the breasts with breast implants.

What about silicone? Is it safe?

All breast implants have a silicone shell or envelope. Even the so-called "saline" implants have a silicone shell but are filled with saline. Silicone gel filled implants are the most commonly used implants today, with millions inserted world-wide. This silicone gel is called "cohesive" which means that even if the shell breaks, which is exceedingly rare, the gel stays where it is. Older implants were filled with liquid silicone and had a thin shell, so that if they did break the liquid silicone could be troublesome. Despite that many women still have these implants in place with no adverse effects. Modern implants are the safest available and problems are very rare. There is no evidence that silicone itself is harmful to the body, as was thought by some people many years ago. In fact there is a huge body of literature supporting the safety of silicone. Mr Callan usually uses cohesive gel tear drop shaped silicone implants, unless you would prefer round or saline implants. Modern implants should last for many years, perhaps even a lifetime.

Is Mr Callan experienced at this procedure?

This is an important question to ask. Not only is Mr Callan experienced at this procedure, but he performs breast augmentation regularly and keeps up to date with the latest techniques. It is also important to know that as a fully trained plastic surgeon Mr Callan performs this procedure to the high standards of Australian Plastic Surgery.

Can I see photographs?

You can see photographs in our office when you have a consultation. As Mr Callan performs breast augmentation frequently, there are large numbers of photographs to look at many of which will be of patients with a problem similar to yours. We do not publish photographs on the web for a number of reasons, but the most important of these is that you need realistic photographs for your particular breast type and the size and shape you want.

Who has breast augmentation?

Women aged at least 18 and onwards who want larger breasts. Occasionally younger females will be considered if they have significant breast asymmetry.

Am I suitable?

You need to be sensible, honest about your reasons, happy with your informed decision, and be as healthy as possible. A time of personal crisis is no time to be making decisions about such surgery. You may need more discussion if you have a family history of breast cancer, or your breasts have sagged a lot after weight loss or breast feeding.

What would stop me from having the surgery?

You must not be smoking, outside the BMI range of 18-28, under stress when making your decision, or have a medical condition that would make surgery unsafe.

How is it done?

Breast augmentation surgery is done in a fully accredited hospital. Breast implants are inserted under the breast, and in addition they may also be under the pectoral muscle if you are thin. This helps to disguise the implant. The incisions can be under the breast, through the coloured part around the nipple (areola), or in the armpit, depending on your preference.

What are the benefits?

This is entirely a personal matter. If the size of your breasts currently distresses you, larger breasts may be the answer. However the benefits depend on whether or not you have been properly assessed and you may need to consider other options prior to surgery. For instance it may just be that you want firmer lifted breasts, or more even breasts, or something else. This needs to be discussed if appropriate.

What are the risks?

All surgery carries some element of risk. You can minimize your risk by being as healthy as possible and as psychologically prepared as possible, by selecting an experienced and qualified surgeon, and giving yourself a stress free time during which to recover. Despite this there are some risks that you will need to discuss. The most common of these is firmness of the implants after a time, known as capsule formation. This is now less commonly a problem with the newer implants and techniques. A few women may lose some sensation in the breasts or nipples, but most do not. Breast feeding is certainly possible after breast augmentation, but some women find it a little more difficult than it would have been otherwise. There are other risks common to all surgery, and you should be aware of these.

Are there scars?

The incision lines for the surgery are always present, but fade over the first six to twelve months. While always present, as a rule the incision lines are inconspicuous unless specifically searched for, or viewed at certain angles.

How long am I in hospital for?

Breast augmentation can be a day procedure or overnight, depending how you pull up after the anaesthetic. Someone will need to take you home and should be with you the first night. Breast augmentation is not a particularly painful procedure, but can be a little uncomfortable for a couple of days if the implants are placed under the muscle. If the implants are placed under the breast alone then discomfort is minimal. Mr Callan does not use drains as they are unnecessary for this procedure.

How long will I need to recover?

This varies but usually ranges from a few days to a few weeks depending on what you do. If your activities are sedentary, then you may only need a few days, but if you do heavy work and lifting you may need up to three weeks. It's a good idea to take some time so as you don't put pressure on your recovery. The same guidelines apply to exercise, with mild to moderate exercise allowable early on to full aerobic activities by three weeks. By the way, you can shower within hours of surgery, as dressings are minimal (a piece of tape). You must not drive until you are fully recovered from both the anaesthetic and the discomfort of surgery so as you are fully capable. If in doubt, don't.

Can I wear a bra after surgery?

You can wear any bra you want the day after surgery, and some even prefer to wear no bra. It's up to you.

Will I need to be seen after surgery?

Yes. We will keep in close contact with you by telephone for the first few days and then will see you about five days after surgery, then at three weeks, then at three months. You are of course welcome to call or visit anytime with any concerns.