



**PETER
CALLAN**

PLASTIC SURGEON

Gynaecomastia

(Male breast tissue)

What is it?

Gynaecomastia is the formation of breast tissue in men. It can be quite distressing and people affected feel understandably self-conscious. Many boys develop it at puberty but it usually settles with time. There is no reason for gynaecomastia in the majority of men who have it. In some, however, certain medical conditions and medications can be associated.

Is Mr Callan experienced at this procedure?

Mr Callan has many years of experience at this procedure. He performs gynaecomastia surgery regularly and keeps up to date with the latest techniques. As a fully trained plastic surgeon, Mr Callan performs this procedure to the highest standard available.

Can I see photographs?

You can see photographs of people who have had this procedure when you have your consultation. As Mr Callan performs this procedure frequently, we have a large number of photographs of those who have your type of gynaecomastia.

Who has surgery for gynaecomastia?

Men and boys who develop visible breast tissue which is distressing for them. It is normal for men to have a small amount of breast tissue. It looks natural and gives a smooth contour to the chest.

Am I suitable?

You need to be sensible and honest about your reasons for wanting gynaecomastia surgery and happy with your informed decision. You should also be as healthy as possible. A time of personal crisis is no time to be making decisions about such surgery.

What would make me unsuitable for surgery?

Smoking, being outside the BMI (body mass index) range of 18-28, under stress when making your decision, or having a medical condition that would make surgery unsafe.

How is it done?

Mr Callan performs all his surgery at St John of God Hospital in Geelong, a fully accredited hospital. An incision is made around the areola (coloured part around the nipple). The excess breast tissue is removed and the skin allowed to retract onto the chest. For severe gynaecomastia some skin may need to be removed.

Will I have scars?

The only incision line is the one within the areola. There may also be a horizontal incision in severe gynaecomastia but this is rare. The incision lines are always there but as time goes on they generally improve to the extent that they are barely visible, so they're not a great concern for most people.

What are the benefits?

What you get out of surgery is entirely a personal matter. If the size of your gynaecomastia currently distresses you, surgery may help. However, the benefits depend on whether or not you have been properly assessed. You may need to consider other options prior to surgery, such as weight loss or cessation of some medications.

What are the risks?

All surgery carries some element of risk. You can minimise your risk by being as healthy as possible and as psychologically prepared as possible, by selecting an experienced and qualified surgeon, and by giving yourself a stress free time during which to recover. The particular risks and complications of this surgery will be discussed at your first consultation. The most common of these is that it takes a couple of months for the chest to assume its final shape. A few men may lose some sensation in the nipples but that is not usually a concern. There are other risks common to all surgery and you will be made aware of these.

How long will I be in hospital for?

Gynaecomastia surgery can be done as a day procedure but may involve an overnight stay, depending how you are after the anaesthetic. Someone will need to take you home from hospital and should stay with you the first night. Gynaecomastia surgery is not a particularly painful procedure but can be a little uncomfortable for a couple of days. You will be given medication if it is required to keep you comfortable.

How long will I need to recover?

This ranges from a few days to a few weeks. 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 out from more strenuous activities so you don't prolong your recovery. Mild to moderate exercise is allowed early on and full aerobic activities after three weeks. You can shower within hours of surgery as dressings are minimal. You must not drive until you are fully recovered from both the anaesthetic and the discomfort of surgery. If in doubt, don't.

Will I wear a garment after surgery?

You will be given instructions on the purchase of a garment prior to surgery. This garment is important in the early postoperative period to help flatten the chest and keep discomfort to a minimum. You can discard it after a couple of weeks.

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 and three months. You are of course welcome to call or visit any time with any concerns.