

Breast Augmentation

Breast augmentation is a surgical procedure done to enlarge breast size. It may also be done as reconstruction after surgery for breast cancer, or to correct uneven breast size. Implants are placed behind the breast tissue either under, or on top of the muscle layer of your chest wall.

The procedure can be done under local or general anesthesia. There is a choice of areas where an incision can be made to insert the implant. A common location is near the skin fold under each breast. Alternate locations for incisions are the areola (the pigmented area around the nipple) or under the arm. Your surgeon will discuss with you where your incisions will be located.

After Surgery

Length of Stay

You will usually go home the same day as your surgery. You must arrange for someone to drive you home and stay with you for 24 hours.

Pain and Nausea Management

- You will have some discomfort across your chest when you wake from surgery. You will be given medication to relieve the pain, either by injection or by mouth. Tell your nurse if you are having discomfort.
- When you go home, your surgeon may give you a prescription for pain medication. If not, you may take a medication such as acetaminophen (for example, Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (for example, Advil® or Motrin®). **Follow the directions on the package or ask your doctor or pharmacist.**
- If you still have nausea when you go home, you can take Gravol®, either by tablet or by rectal suppository. You can buy Gravol® at a pharmacy. **Follow the directions on the package or ask your doctor or pharmacist.**

Diet

- Starting with fluids, you may resume eating your normal diet when you feel able.
- If you have nausea, take only sips of clear fluids and small bites of soda crackers until it passes.
- Eat a nutritious, well-balanced diet to help healing. Include whole grain cereals and breads, as well as fresh fruits and vegetables. Also try to drink 6 to 8 glasses of water daily. This is especially important if you are taking a medication containing codeine (for example, Tylenol® #3), which can be constipating.

Wound Care

- You will have a gauze dressing covering your breasts. Before you leave the hospital, you will be given instructions about your dressing and your appointment at your surgeon's office.
- Your breasts may be supported by a tensor dressing, an elastic bandage, or by wearing a bra. Ask your surgeon before your surgery, what type of support you will need after surgery and for how long.
- To avoid irritation of the incision lines while they are healing, keep a clean light gauze between your incisions and your bra.

- If you have non-dissolvable sutures, they will be removed in your surgeon's office. You will be told when to have them removed. Dissolvable sutures do not need to be removed as your body will absorb them as you heal.
- You will be told when you can shower (usually after your first dressing change). When you have a shower, turn your back to the force of the water flow.
- During rest or sleep attempt to lie only on your back, not your side or front, **for 7 days** after surgery. If necessary, put pillows beside you to prevent you from rolling over.
- Wear clothing that opens fully down the front. **Do not** pull clothing over your head for at least **7 days** after surgery.

Activity

- Rest on the day of your surgery. You may resume light activities the next day.
- Let comfort guide you when using your arms for activities such as hair care. Do not raise your arms above your shoulders for several days after surgery.
- **Check with your surgeon before:** returning to work, resuming strenuous or vigorous activity such as aerobics, heavy housework (for example, vacuuming) or yardwork.

Problems To Report To Your Surgeon

Phone your surgeon **right away** if you have any of the following:

- blood soaking through your dressing and not stopping
- your breasts suddenly become more swollen and firm to touch, or there is a big difference in the size of one breast to the other
- sudden onset of severe bruising
- pain not helped by medication
- chills or fever (temperature above 38 °C or 100.4 °F)
- red, swollen incision or bad-smelling drainage from an incision

If you are unable to reach your surgeon, go to a hospital Emergency Department right away. If possible, go to the hospital where your surgery was done.

Follow-Up

Phone your surgeon's office when you go home and arrange an appointment for a follow-up visit.

Please speak with your surgeon if you have questions or concerns.

This material is designed for information purposes only. It should not be used in place of medical advice, instruction and/or treatment. If you have specific questions, please consult your doctor or appropriate healthcare professional.