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## Breast Enlargement

Breast Enlargement, Breast Augmentation, Breast Implants, Boob Job

### WHY AND WHEN IS A BREAST ENLARGMENT PERFORMED?

The size of a woman's breast will largely be determined by genetics but it will also be influenced by fluctuations in weight, pregnancy, breast feeding and hormonal changes.

Some women have problems with asymmetry (one breast much larger than the other). Others have very small breasts, breasts that are out of proportion for their frame or breasts that decrease in size after pregnancy. Surgery would not usually be offered to a teenage girl whose breast might not have reached full maturity.

### WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION?

Breast enlargement surgery will usually be performed under a general anaesthetic, takes one to two hours and in some cases might be performed as a day case without the need for an overnight stay in hospital. The surgery involves placement of an implant either under the skin and breast tissue or deeper under the muscle under the breast. There are many different types of implant available. They all have a silicone outer layer but may be filled with silicone (cohesive gel that doesn't run if cut), saline (salt water), oils or a combination of these. The choice of implant should be discussed with your surgeon and the position of the scars should also be discussed. There are different techniques available which result in different scars either under the breast, around the nipple or in the armpit.

Before the operation, depending on your age and fitness, you may have to undergo some simple health checks such as blood tests and a mammogram. If you decide on surgery you will be required to sign a consent form giving permission for the operation. This requires that you are aware of the risks and complications involved with the procedure.

### ARE THERE ANY COMPLICATIONS?

There are general risks associated with a general anaesthetic including chest infection and DVTs (clots in the veins of the legs). There are risks specific to breast surgery.

Bleeding, sometime requiring a return to theatre and problems with wound healing and infection can occur particularly in those who smoke and it is therefore advisable to stop smoking before the operation. In some cases infection might result in the implant having to be removed. In most cases the scars will fade and be hardly noticeable and would not be visible in normal underwear or swim wear. Scars vary enormously from one woman to the next and some people can have problems with red, raised, and lumpy scars. Internal scarring around the implant, known as a capsule, occurs to some extent in up to 10% of women. In the worst cases this leads to hard painful breasts and may require further surgery. Asymmetry (one side different in size or shape) can occasionally be a problem as can numbness or altered sensation. Rupture or leakage of the implant is rare. Despite media reports, there is currently no convincing evidence linking implant to increased risk of breast cancer or other health problems such as autoimmune diseases and rheumatoid arthritis. It is possible to have mammograms after breast enlargement surgery and it may also be possible to breast feed in many cases.

### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE OPERATION?

After the operation there will be swelling and pain and you will be advised to take pain killers and wear a supportive bra day and night. You may have dissolvable stitches but any permanent stitches will need to be removed at around 10 days.

### WHEN CAN NORMAL ACTIVITIES BE RESUMED?

You should avoid lifting, driving and strenuous activity for up to 3 weeks. Depending on your job, you should be able to return to work 2 to 4 weeks after the operation.