



breast enlargement (*augmentation*)

When considering cosmetic surgery, it is important that you are fully informed on all aspects of the procedure that you are seeking.

Why do women seek breast enlargement?

- In order to feel more feminine and confident.
- To increase their choice of clothes.
- To enhance their figure and self-esteem.

Who is suitable for breast enlargement?

- Women who have always had small breasts.
- Women who have lost breast volume following weight loss.
- Women who have lost breast size following pregnancy and breast-feeding.
- Women who have lost a breast through cancer or other disease.
- Women in who development of the breasts have been stunted or uneven.

What to think about at this stage?

It is important to be clear about what you are trying to achieve from your surgery before you see the surgeon. Remember that there are technical considerations as to how much the surgeon can change a woman's breasts, regarding shape and volume. The aim should always be to create a sensible end result that is in harmony with the woman's figure and build. The patient's expectations must be realistic.

How is breast enlargement performed?

- The operation is usually performed under general anaesthesia, but local anaesthesia can be employed in certain cases.
- It takes about sixty minutes.
- Most patients stay in hospital for one night.
- If your work is not physical, expect to return to work after two weeks.
- Expect to be back to normal within four to six weeks although some physical activities cannot be undertaken for three months.



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As with most surgical procedures, there are many options, depending upon the patients wishes, technical considerations and surgeon preferences. At consultation, the surgeon will advise you on the best option for you. However, basically there are three routes of access:

- Around the lower half of the areola.
- In the natural crease under the breast.
- Through the armpit.

Having made the incision, the implant can be placed either:

- Directly under the breast tissue i.e. in front of the pectoral muscle.
- Behind the pectoral muscle.

Type of implants

Nowadays, the choice of implant is really between cohesive silicone gel and saline implants. Following the UK Government's recent independent Review Group's report on the safety of silicone breast implants, the great majority of surgeons and patients choose silicone gel implants.

Following the operation

As with all surgery, you must expect to feel bruised and sore. Your breasts are likely to be swollen. You may be asked to sleep on your back. You may also have to wear a support bra. Most patients are able to fully resume normal activity within three to four weeks.

Any sutures are removed after seven days, but some surgeons prefer to use absorbable non-removable sutures. The scars will fade over a period of time. In many women, they heal to form very faint white lines in about nine to twelve months. However, it is important to remember that no surgical scar ever totally disappears.



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Risks and complications

Cosmetic surgery is amongst the safest of medical procedures. However, all patients must understand and accept that no surgical procedure is absolutely free from risk.

At consultation, your surgeon will discuss these risks with you, especially relating to the implants themselves. Breast enlargement does not usually interfere with breast-feeding but does have implications for mammography for screening for breast cancer. Hence your GP must be informed that you have had breast augmentation. However, there are special X-rays as well as mammography to help in diagnosis if a lump is suspected.

How long will the results of your breast enlargement last?

For the great majority of women, the results of their breast enlargement are permanent. However, women are advised to have an 'MOT' as it were every five to seven years. Women, who opt for larger implants, may find that their breasts sag rather more as they get older, on account of the extra weight of the implants.

Update on Breast Implants

In the UK, there are no restrictions on the sale or use of CE-marked silicone gel filled breast implants. Their safety has been extensively reviewed by the Independent Review Group (IRG) - see IRG web site www.silicone-review.gov.uk for details and conclusions.

Only CE approved breast implants are used at Profile Cosmetic Surgery. The company also supports the UK Breast Implant Registry (UKBIR) which collects data on breast implant usage by ensuring that its hospitals provide patients with the opportunity to participate.

A revised edition of the Department of Health's booklet for women considering breast augmentation is available in electronic format at www.dh.gov.uk