



Spire Healthcare

Treatment summary

Breast augmentation operation

Augmentation mammoplasty – a breast enlargement operation – is the only way to permanently increase the size of your breasts. It usually involves inserting implants behind the breasts.

The operation usually requires a hospital stay of one or two days. It is usually done under general anaesthesia, which means you will be asleep during the procedure.

A wide variety of implants are available and your surgeon will advise what size, shape and type of implants are suitable options for you. The safety of silicone implants has attracted much publicity in recent years. The Department of Health asked an independent review group to look at the evidence in 1998. Their research found no evidence of any connection between silicone-based

implants and illness. However, some other types of implant (soya oil implants) have been withdrawn.

The Department of Health has produced a booklet for women considering having breast implants, which explains the different types of implant available and the risks and benefits associated with each. Contact the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency for a copy on **020 7084 2000**, or visit **www.mhra.gov.uk**

Your surgeon will explain the potential benefits and risks of having your breasts enlarged and will also discuss the alternatives to the procedure. Your surgeon will also give you advice about the size and type of bra you will need to take to hospital for after the operation.

About the operation

The implant can be placed either directly under the breast tissue or deeper behind the muscle on which the breast lies. It is inserted through a cut made in the crease underneath the breast, around the lower edge of the nipple, in the armpit or occasionally elsewhere. Your surgeon will give you advice on the technique that is most suitable for you.

Once the implant has been adjusted to the correct shape and position, the cut is closed with stitches. The operation usually lasts one to two hours.

Breast enlargement is a commonly performed and generally safe operation. For most people, the benefits are greater than the disadvantages. However, all operations carry risks as well as benefits.

Complications specific to breast enlargement include infection, which may need to be treated with additional antibiotics, and sometimes further surgery.

Changes in sensation are quite common. Different parts of the breasts, including the nipple, can become more or less sensitive than before. This is usually temporary, but occasionally lasts up to six months, and numbness can be permanent.

Another potential complication is capsular contracture, when a layer of scar tissue hardens around the implant causing the breast to feel hard. The implant may need to be removed and, if you wish, replaced with another one.

There's also a risk of rupture, where a split or hole develops in the shell of the implant. The implant will need to be removed. Modern implants (those used in the UK since the early '90s) appear to rupture less frequently than older ones.

As with any cosmetic procedure it is important that you review your expectations thoroughly with your surgeon before you decide to proceed.

The chance of complications depends on the exact type of operation you are having and other factors such as your general health. Ask your surgeon to explain in more detail how any risks apply to you.

To find out more about having breast augmentation in a Spire Healthcare hospital, contact your local Spire hospital.



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Spire Healthcare
PO Box 62647
120 Holborn
London
EC1P 1JH

www.spirehealthcare.com

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