

CONSIDERING BREAST AUGMENTATION? DO YOUR HOMEWORK!

IF YOU DESIRE A FULLER BUST OR IMPROVED CONTOUR, BREAST AUGMENTATION MAY BE THE ANSWER FOR YOU. BREAST AUGMENTATION IS A VERY POPULAR PROCEDURE WHERE A BREAST IMPLANT IS INSERTED UNDER THE CHEST MUSCLES AND BREAST TISSUE TO CREATE A FEMININE, NATURAL SHAPE.



Choosing the right surgeon for this procedure is of the utmost importance; there are still a number of alarming stories attributed to cosmetic surgery which has gone badly because people have not selected a skilled medical professional, even here in New Zealand. Ensure the Plastic Surgeon you choose is a registered, qualified one, recognised by the New Zealand Association of Plastic Surgeons (NZAPS). While all surgeons have FRACS following their name (which stands for Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons), there should be a descriptor too, which denotes that surgeon's specialty if it is relevant to the field they are practicing in. For example, FRACS (plastics) is a plastic surgeon and the type of surgeon you should be seeking to perform your breast augmentation.

Having decided you would like to have a breast augmentation, perhaps you are unsure about the process leading up to the operation. Some women find this part more daunting than the actual procedure, but there really is no need to. There are some basic factors a breast augmentation consultation should take into account. The patient's age and medical history, previous or future pregnancies, family history and if connective tissue diseases are noted. The post-operative course is described in detail including restrictions and how long it will be until you are able to return to activities and work. The expectation that implants are not life-long and that further surgery may be indicated at some stage is also discussed. While the implants won't change shape, your body will and you may need to consider having the implants exchanged, lifted or removed at some period in the future. Some women may also need a mastopexy, which involves having the skin re-tightened as well as the implant added.

From time to time the media raises issues about breast implants and their safety. Naturally, this type of information only emphasises risk and seldom addresses the great benefits that only women who have had augmentation or reconstruction can understand. It is accepted that women with implants, whether for augmentation or reconstruction, have no increased risk of breast cancer. You should expect to discuss this with your plastic surgeon, including the history and controversy of silicone implants, the new issues surrounding ALCL (Anaplastic Large-cell Lymphoma) currently under research and a full discussion about the risks of implantation and surgery in general.

During your initial consultation with your plastic surgeon, you will also have an examination, which will take place with a female chaperone, for your comfort. Patients are asked to strip to the waist and wear a gown and an assessment of chest wall asymmetry will be done. It is not uncommon to have different sized implants in order to compensate for pre-existing ribcage differences. A thorough measurement of existing chest and breast dimensions is taken in order to make a scientific analysis of what your frame can accept, with regard to shape and size. It is particularly helpful if your plastic surgeon has a special sizing set of implants that allow you to see what you will look like with a certain implant in place. These are different to the actual implants used in surgery, but give a better idea of the post-operative result. All patients who are at the right age for screening mammograms will get an up-to-date one before surgery. If there is a family history for breast disease, the threshold is even younger. Written information should be provided to take away.

For further information on breast surgery please contact

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