

# What is Breast Augmentation?

Did you know that breast augmentation was one of the top five cosmetic surgery procedures performed in the United States for 2013? Breast augmentation, also called augmentation mammoplasty, refers to a surgical procedure which increases the size of a woman's breasts.

The surgery is performed as either an outpatient basis or inpatient basis, which requires an overnight stay in the hospital. Breast enlargement can be done under local anesthesia, where you stay awake during the procedure, or under general anesthesia. The procedure lasts from one to several hours, so most patients choose general anesthesia.

The cost of augmentation mammoplasty runs around \$5,000 to \$10,000, which includes the cost of the implants, surgery, anesthesia, prescription medication, post-surgery garments and hospital stay, if staying overnight. As this is an elective procedure, your medical insurance probably won't cover the cost of cosmetic breast implants. Ask your doctor if his office offers any kind of financing options for cosmetic surgery procedures. Breast reconstruction performed after mastectomy should be covered by your insurance plan.

## It's All in a Name

This type of cosmetic surgery procedure is called a variety of names including:

- Breast augmentation
- Augmentation mammoplasty
- Breast implants
- Breast enlargement

This procedure helps restore self-confidence in women who aren't happy with the appearance, size or shape of their breasts. You may decide to have this plastic surgery procedure for a variety of reasons including:

- Restore breast fullness
- Restore breast symmetry
- Repair breast after injury
- Reconstruct breast after mastectomy

Breast augmentation is not always enough to restore a youthful appearance to your breasts. A breast lift, AKA mastopexy, is often performed to help lift severely drooping breasts. Consult with your plastic surgeon and ask if you can have both surgeries done at the same time or if a separate surgery is required.

## Surgical vs Non-Surgical Breast Enlargement

Saline implants and silicone implants are the two most common methods of surgical breast augmentation. Saline implants use a silicone shell filled with a saline (salt water) solution and silicone implants use a silicone shell filled with silicone (plastic gel).

Non-surgical breast enlargement options include autologous fat graft transfer. This method is a less invasive option involving the transfer of fat from another area of your body, like your stomach, thighs or hips. The non-surgical technique can be done on an outpatient basis under local anesthesia.

The fat transfer technique gives a slight increase in the volume of your breasts from 1/2 to 2 full cup sizes. If you want a larger increase in breast size, then the traditional route of breast implants via surgery is the only way to go.

Autologous tissue flaps, which harvests tissue from your thighs, buttocks or abdomen, and relocates it to your breasts, is another method used for breast enlargement. This is a lengthy procedure, which can take from 4 to over 6 hours, and is used more often for breast reconstruction surgery after mastectomy.

## **Safety Concerns**

Recovery from breast enlargement surgery typically takes from 4 to 6 weeks. Capsular contracture, referring to formation of scar tissue around the implant, is just one of many complications that can occur after breast augmentation surgery. Additional safety concerns include:

- Pain
- Infection
- Loss of sensation
- Scar tissue
- Rupture

Make sure you let your doctor know if you've had breast implants, or any other type of cosmetic breast procedure, before scheduling your yearly mammogram. Breast implants may interfere with the mammogram image. Your doctor may suggest having an ultrasound or an MRI in lieu of the mammogram, for better images of your breast and surrounding tissue.

## **FDA and Breast Implants**

1992 - FDA bans sale of silicone implants

2006 - FDA lifts the ban on certain brands of silicone implants

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved two types of implants for use in the United States; saline-filled implants and silicone gel-filled implants. The FDA mentions on their website they have "approved implants for increasing breast size in women, for reconstruction

after breast cancer surgery or trauma, and to correct developmental defects. Implants are also approved to correct or improve the result of a previous surgery. “

For more information on the safety of breast implants, read the article [Breast Implant Surgery](#), on the FDA website.

## Find a Breast Augmentation Specialist on MedSpa

Do you research before deciding on a plastic surgeon for your breast augmentation procedure. Find before and after photos of surgical techniques in the MedSpa directory. If you still aren't sure if this procedure is right for you get a [FREE breast augmentation consultation](#), from a cosmetic surgeon near you, on MedSpa.com.

## Breast Augmentation Research

For more information on breast augmentation, refer to these articles.

1. Breast Implants: <http://www.webmd.com/beauty/breast-implants/cosmetic-procedures-breast-augmentation>
2. Breast Augmentation: <http://www.smartbeautyguide.com/procedures/breast/breast-augmentation>
3. Breast Reconstruction: <http://ww5.komen.org/BreastCancer/BreastReconstruction.html>

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