

General Information About Breast Augmentation

There are two options of implants for women having breast augmentation surgery. The following are:

- **Saline Breast Implants:** Implants that are filled with sterile salt water. These can be filled varying amounts of saline that can affect the shape, firmness and feel of the breast. Currently, saline-filled implants are FDA approved for augmentation in women 18 years of age or older. In the unlikely event that a saline implant leaks, the saltwater is harmlessly absorbed by the body.
- **Silicone Breast Implants:** Implants that are filled with an elastic gel. This type of implant feels and moves like natural breast tissue. Currently, silicone-filled implants are FDA-approved for augmentation in women 22 years of age and older.

Most women having breast augmentation surgery today receive silicone-filled implants. Silicone gel implants are available only if you are 22-years of age.

The technique used for your surgery depends not on only your surgeon's preferences, but also on your desired results. There are three different techniques for breast augmentation:

- **Inframammary Incision:** An incision made into the fold under the breast
- **Transaxillary incision:** An incision made in the underarm area
- **Periareolar incision:** An incision made at the edge of the areola

Once the incision is made, a pocket is created into which the implant is inserted. This pocket is made either directly behind the breast tissue or beneath the pectoral muscle located below the breast tissue and above the chest wall.

How Do I Begin?

The first step in the breast augmentation process is setting up a personal consultation with Dr. Stevens.

During your consultation, Dr. Stevens will discuss your specific cosmetic goals and assess your physical and emotional health. You will learn about the options available for breast augmentation and how those options can improve the appearance of your breasts. Dr. Stevens will detail the various options for breast augmentation as well as the likely outcomes of surgery. Potential risks, complications and your health history will also be discussed at this time and any questions that you may have will be addressed.

Based upon your individual case, Dr. Stevens will develop and recommend a specific course of treatment for you. Dr. Stevens will also help you understand the factors that may affect your results. For example, gaining or losing a significant amount of weight may change your breast size. Pregnancy can also alter breast size in an unpredictable way.

As part of the consultation, your breasts will be examined and perhaps photographed for your medical record. During this exam, Dr. Stevens will consider the size and shape of your breasts, the quality of your skin and the placement of your nipples and areolas (the pigmented skin surrounding the nipples). Dr. Stevens may recommend that you have a baseline mammogram before surgery to assist in detecting any future changes in your breast tissue. After surgery, your mammograms will be done differently because special imaging techniques must be used to visualize the breast tissue.

GLOSSARY TERMS

- **Breast Augmentation:** Also known as augmentation mammoplasty; breast enlargement or breast enhancement by surgery.
- **Breast Implants:** Medical devices placed in your body to enhance an existing breast size or to reconstruct your breast. Breast implants fall into two categories: saline breast implants and silicone breast implants.
- **General Anesthesia:** Drugs and/or gases used during an operation to relieve pain and alter consciousness.
- **Hematoma:** Blood pooling beneath the skin.
- **Inframammary incision:** An incision made in the fold under the breast.
- **Intravenous sedation:** Sedatives administered by injection into a vein to help you relax.
- **Local anesthesia:** A drug injected directly to the site of an incision during an operation to relieve pain.
- **Mammogram:** An x-ray image of the breast.
- **MRI:** Magnetic Resonance Imaging; a painless test to view tissue similar to an x-ray.

3D Imaging: See the Results Before You Undergo surgery

Dr. Stevens uses the Vectra 3D imaging system to help his patients visualize the end result before undergoing any augmentation procedure. Patients can select from a variety of implant sizes and shapes. An image of your actual chest is taken and the selected implants inserted digitally to provide a realistic view of the outcome. This process helps you understand how your body will be transformed and allow you the freedom to change your mind on size and shape of your implant with a clear understanding of how it will look post-op.

Health Considerations

It is important that you inform Dr. Stevens of your current and past health conditions. This should include the following: previous surgical procedures; current medications; the use of vitamins, herbal supplements, nutritional supplements, alcohol, tobacco, and drugs; and any medical conditions that you may have such as cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, circulatory disorders, or diabetes.

It is also imperative that you disclose medical conditions such as any history of breast cancer in your family, the results of mammograms you have had, thyroid disorders (such as Graves' disease), un-active or over-active thyroid, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, circulatory disorders, or diabetes.

Other Procedures to Consider

If your breasts are sagging, a breast lift can be paired with a breast augmentation procedure to improve your results. Some patients also have tummy tucks in conjunction with this procedure to achieve an improved figure. Make sure to ask Dr. Stevens for recommendations if you are considering doing more than one procedure at a time.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Periareolar Incision:** An incision made at the edge of the areola.
- **Submammary or Subglandular Placement:** Breast implants placed directly behind the breast tissue, over the pectoral muscle.
- **Submuscular or Subpectoral Placement:** Breast implants placed under the pectoral muscle, which is located between the breast tissue and chest wall.
- **Sutures:** Stitches used by surgeons to hold skin and tissue together.
- **Transaxillary Incision:** An incision made in the underarm area
- **Ultrasound:** A diagnostic procedure that projects high frequency sound waves into the body and records the echoes as pictures.