



Cosmetic Image Clinics

## **BREAST LIFT (MASTOPEXY)**

Breast lift surgery, also known as mastopexy, will raise and reshape your breasts making them firmer and more shapely. You may elect to have implants inserted at the same time if your breasts are small or have lost their volume (see breast augmentation).

The breasts sag with age as the skin loses elasticity and supporting ligaments become weaker. Pregnancy, weight gain and weight loss further contribute to drooping breasts. Women who are unhappy with the loss of fullness in their upper breasts, with nipples pointing downwards and stretch marks on the skin, may choose a breast lift to regain their original breast shape. The removal of excess skin during this procedure will eliminate some of the stretch marks. Mastopexy can also reduce the size of the areola, the darker skin surrounding the nipple.

A breast lift can enhance your appearance and your self-confidence. However, before you undergo mastopexy surgery you need to be well informed about the procedure and discuss your expectations with your doctor. If you're planning to have more children, it may be a good idea to postpone your breast lift. While there are no special risks that affect future pregnancies (for example, mastopexy usually doesn't interfere with breast-feeding), pregnancy is likely to stretch your breasts again and offset the results of the procedure.

### **The Surgery**

Breast lift / mastopexy surgery is performed as a day procedure within a hospital facility, under general anaesthesia. The procedure takes between 1½ and 3 hours.

The type of technique employed during a breast lift procedure depends upon the size of your breasts and how much they sag. The breast lift procedure basically involves removing skin from around the areola and possibly also from the lower half of the breast, and then shifting the remaining skin to firm up the breast. Often an implant will be inserted during the procedure to add volume and improve the overall contour.

There are two general categories of breast lift surgery. The concentric (or "doughnut") breast lift surgery is best performed on women with smaller breasts, and the more common anchor-shaped breast lift surgery works best for women with extensive drooping. The surgeon will discuss with you all your options and recommend the one that is best for you.

### **Concentric Breast Lift.**

This procedure involves drawing concentric circles around the areola and then removing this doughnut-shaped piece of skin. As the nipple and areola are moved upwards, the outer skin is pulled in and then sutured into place.

Anchor-shaped Breast Lift. The first step involves creating an anchor-shaped incision that follows the contour of your breast. A keyhole shape incision is then made around the nipple and areola, defining a new, higher location for the nipple. The excess skin below the incision will be removed



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along with any excess breast tissue. The surgeon will then move the nipple and areola up into the keyhole area and suture around the areola, down to the chest and along the sides of the breast.

### **Risk Factors**

Mastopexy does leave noticeable, permanent scars, although they will be covered by your bra or bathing suit (poor healing and wider scarring is more common in smokers). The procedure may also leave the breasts slightly uneven.

You can expect some loss of feeling in your nipples and breast skin, caused by the swelling after surgery. This numbness usually fades as the swelling subsides over the next six weeks or so. In some patients, however, it may last a year or more, and occasionally it may be permanent.

As with any surgery, there is always a possibility of complications or a reaction to the anaesthesia. Bleeding and infection following a breast lift are uncommon, but they can cause scars to widen. Whilst the majority of women do not experience complications you should discuss with your doctor any concerns you have in this regard.

### **Planning Your Surgery**

In your initial consultation, the doctor will evaluate your health and explain which surgical technique is most appropriate for you, based on the size and shape of your breasts and placement of the nipples. You will be shown before and after photos of other women whose breasts are similar to yours and the results which they have achieved from surgery.

You may discuss whether implants are desirable to achieve a better shape or fullness in your breasts.

### **Post-Operative Care**

The pain associated with breast lift surgery varies from person to person but in general it's not considered to be particularly painful. There may be pain for the first 24 hours and discomfort for a week or more. We will ensure that you have adequate pain medication, however most patients cope extremely well with minimal reliance on medication.

Following the surgery you will have dressings covering incision sites which will restrict your ability to shower in the first week following surgery. A compression bra is not required to be worn, however, dressings will need to be changed during the first week.

It is recommended that patients take two weeks off work after breast lift surgery. If your job involves any form of heavy lifting or straining of any kind, the time will increase. If you take longer to heal provision needs to be made for additional time off, although in most cases two weeks is adequate. During this time you should avoid household duties. You will need to avoid aerobics or other strenuous exercises until about six weeks after your surgery. However if you have specific concerns, you should discuss them with your doctor.



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You will be reassessed in our clinic 7 days after surgery when the sutures around the areola are removed. The remaining sutures will be removed 14 days after surgery. You will subsequently be seen at our clinic 6 weeks and 3 months after surgery.

There is a very large amount of information available on breast lift surgery.

Much of this information will be explained to you during your consultation appointment. At Cosmetic Image Clinics we understand the issues involved in making such an important decision and we are happy to discuss your concerns at any time.