

## THE SURGERY

Breast augmentation surgery requires a general anaesthetic, with the operation taking 1-2 hours, and is usually performed as a day-stay or overnight-stay procedure. Following the surgery it is important to have restricted light activities, with no lifting or heavy duties for 7-10 days. Most patients may drive again and return to work within 10 days after the surgery. Heavy activities and sport should not be undertaken for 3-4 weeks following the surgery.

### SUMMARY

Breast augmentation can enhance your appearance and your self-confidence, enlarging your breasts and making them more proportional with the rest of your body.

North Shore Cosmetic Surgery is a group of Plastic Surgeons dedicated to providing a high standard of service to the North Shore.

All members are Fellows of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons, Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons and Australian Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, and have been trained to the highest possible standards.

North Shore Cosmetic Surgery provides a comprehensive range of cosmetic and reconstructive plastic surgery procedures, as well as a full range of ancillary treatments.

## PRACTICE LOCATIONS

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North Shore  Cosmetic Surgery

A patient guide  
to understanding

Breast Augmentation

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## INTRODUCTION

Breast augmentation can enhance your appearance and your self-confidence, enlarging your breasts and making them more proportional with the rest of your body. Breast augmentation can also be used to correct differences in the size of your breasts or sagging breasts which can occur after pregnancy and breast-feeding.

## PREOPERATIVE DECISIONS

There are many choices and options in breast augmentation, which require careful planning to individualise which are the best options for you. All of these choices have advantages and disadvantages, which you should understand before you make a decision with your surgeon.

Breast implants will make your breasts larger, but the underlying shape of your breasts will not change, and differences in the size and shape of your breasts may even be more obvious after the surgery.

## SILICONE OR SALINE IMPLANTS?

Most patients choose silicone implants rather than saline implants because they have a more natural look and feel.

The main reason for choosing saline implants is that if the implant were to rupture the breast “deflates” and the saline is simply absorbed by the body. However, saline implants tend to demonstrate wrinkles, which can be palpable and sometimes visible. To avoid this saline implants can be slightly overfilled, but this leads to a more spherical appearance with increased fullness in the upper part of the breast and a firmer feel to the implant. Saline implants have a rupture rate of 1-3% per year, which requires another operation to correct.

Modern silicone implants are substantially different from the old type of silicone implants used in the 1970s and 80s. The casing of the implant is much thicker and has a textured surface, which reduces the chance of capsular contracture (hardening) of the implant. Modern cohesive silicone gel implants contain a gel that is similar in consistency to a set jelly, which retains its shape and does not run like a liquid, as the old silicone gel did. Another advantage of the cohesive gel implants is that they are made in a variety of round and tear-drop shapes, which means it is easier to choose an implant to achieve the breast shape that you desire.

Misinformation emerged about silicone in the late 80's and early 90's. The effects of silicone implants have since been studied extensively these claims were made, looking at 100,000s of women with breast implants. In June 1999 The Institute of Medicine at the National Academy of Sciences in the U.S.A. released a report which confirmed that there is no increased risk of the development of cancer, immunologic or neurological problems associated with the use of silicone breast implants, which had been claimed in the late 80's. Patients with implants can breast-feed normally, as there is no effect on breast milk.

## OTHER CHOICES

Implants are placed either behind the breast tissue or under the pectoralis muscle on the chest wall. Breast implants placed underneath the muscle have a more natural shape, a lower chance of capsular contracture (hardening) of the implant, and it is easier for mammography. There is also a choice of incision - in the crease under the breast, under the areola or in the armpit, all of which have advantages and disadvantages which you should discuss with your surgeon.



Photograph of a cohesive silicone gel implant cut in half - the silicone retains its shape due to increased cross-linking of the silicone molecules