

Breast augmentation, technically known as augmentation mammoplasty, is a surgical procedure to enhance the size and shape of a woman's breasts. Many women find that breast augmentation not only enhances their appearance but also contributes to their quality of life. Women decide to have breast augmentation for a variety of reasons. For many, it is an opportunity to improve their body contour and achieve the more proportional figure they always wanted. Some women view breast augmentation as an option for taking control of their lives and changing their appearance to better reflect how they feel about themselves

One of the first things for you and your plastic surgeon to determine is whether you are a good candidate for breast augmentation. In some cases, women may seek breast augmentation to restore breast volume lost as a result of having children. Weight loss can change the size and shape of the breasts, and breast augmentation (alone or in conjunction with a breast lift) may be recommended to improve these problems. Another reason for undergoing breast augmentation may be to equalize the size of the breasts if one is larger than the other. Perhaps most commonly, women simply feel that their breasts are too small; their clothes fit well around the hips but are often too large at the bust line, making it difficult to wear the styles they prefer. They may feel self-conscious about wearing a swimsuit or form-fitting top, or they lack confidence about their body in intimate situations.

"When I began performing breast augmentations in 1971, we didn't know what questions to ask to best determine which women were good candidates for the surgery," says James L. Baker, MD, of Winter Park, Florida. "I teamed up with a psychiatrist and conducted a psychological study, which was published in 1974 under the title, *Psychosexual Dynamics of Breast Augmentation*. Patients selected at random were evaluated prior to surgery and then at three months and one year after surgery. Our findings included that, for many of these patients, their low self-esteem began when their breast development fell behind that of their peer group during adolescence. We also found that women were internally motivated — they wanted breast augmentation for themselves, not to please others. Studies conducted during the 1990s and in 2000 validated our choice of questions and corroborated our findings that after breast augmentation, more than 90 percent of patients were satisfied, had increased feelings of self-worth, and considered themselves happier." A woman should decide whether to have breast augmentation surgery after careful study and after all aspects of surgery are seriously discussed and considered. "Every patient is unique, bringing different desires and expectations to the plastic surgeon's office about how they would like their appearance to be improved," says O. Allen Guinn, III, MD, of Lee's Summit, Missouri. "Although two women may have very similar appearing chests, they may have vastly divergent opinions about how they want to look after breast enhancement surgery. In my practice, significant time is spent to agree upon reasonable goals. The same procedure; the same implant, incision site, or technique simply doesn't work for every patient." Part of the patient education process for breast augmentation includes helping prospective patients understand the significance of having a foreign material in their body and the responsibility this entails. Like any device, breast implants require "maintenance." This may include using various methods to keep the breasts mobile, wearing a specific type of bra, or self-massaging the breasts. It definitely should include annual check-ups with your plastic surgeon to assess long-term results. "In the initial consultation, I want to find out if breast augmentation is really the right step for each particular patient," says Laurie Casas, MD, of Glenview, Illinois. "I think

many patients approach the surgery without giving a lot of thought to what it means to have a foreign material in their body. A breast implant is not a lifetime device; it is likely, at some point, to require reoperation and replacement. If a patient cannot accept this, then breast enlargement is not the right operation for her. The decision for this surgery cannot be simply an emotional one.” “The outcome a patient achieves from breast augmentation is directly related to the decisions she makes, emphasizes Carl Williams Jr., MD, of Henderson, Nevada. “Make sure you are well informed about the procedure, the physician, and the long-term care and maintenance of your breasts. Do your homework. Be physically, emotionally, and financially prepared for your surgery. Breast implants do not last forever; are not perfect, and may require replacement. Like any surgical procedure, breast augmentation has associated risks and trade-offs.” The doctor-patient consultation offers the opportunity to discuss all of your concerns, desires, and expectations. You should tell your surgeon the breast size you would like to achieve and discuss all your feelings about the appearance of your breasts. Some women seeking breast augmentation may have breast sagging that requires additional surgical techniques in order to achieve a fuller and more rejuvenated breast contour. “Whether a patient needs an augmentation, a mastopexy (breast lift), or both, depends on a variety of factors, the patient’s goals being primary among them,” offers Paul Parker, MD, of Paramus, New Jersey. “When I see patients in consultation and do an examination, I try to get a sense from them of how much volume they have, how much they had when they were younger, and how much they’re seeking. I seek a clear understanding of their goals, and we talk about how to achieve them. I don’t just describe the different techniques and possibilities;

Resources

[Dr Portuese – Seattle WA](#)

[New Vision Counseling and Consulting – Oklahoma City](#)

[Brit Phillips DDS – Fort Worth Texas](#)

[Hollander Dental Associates – Carlsbad CA](#)

[Daniela Rodriguez MD – Michigan](#)

[Reza Nabavian MD – Santa Monica CA](#)

[Atlantic Center For Plastic & Cosmetic Surgery- Atlanta](#)

[Bruce K Smith MD – Houston Texas](#)