

Large breasts can cause many problems extending from social embarrassment to functional, like muscular and shoulder discomforts, sore or stiff neck, back pain and irritation. Many people also complain about having difficulty choosing clothes that fit, have a hard time sleeping and performing physical activities.

Breast reduction surgery will reduce the size of the breasts and improve the shape and position on the chest wall. This surgery can help self-esteem and lifestyle issues, allowing women to engage in activities or sports as they like, wear the types of clothing they desire, improve relationships, or simply avoid embarrassment.

The Breast Reduction Procedure

Surgery requires a thorough evaluation of your breasts and how they relate to your overall body size and shape. At your initial consultation we will discuss your goals and desires, how they impact on your lifestyle, and ultimately how you would like your breasts to look.

The surgery is performed under general anaesthetic and usually takes two to three hours. The results are long lasting and it's highly unlikely that the breasts would ever return to their original size. We use a number of techniques for reduction. They all involve removing some skin and tissue, reshaping the remaining tissue and moving the nipple and areola to the correct position on your breast.

What are the risks of breast reduction?

Specific complications that may occur after a reduction include:

- **Asymmetry of breasts** – After surgery you may discover that the breasts are not exactly the same size or shape. In some cases revision surgery may be required.
- **Losing breast or nipple sensation** – This could be permanent or temporary, depending on the extent of nerve damage.
- **Permanent scarring** – Usually scars around the areolas are not obvious, but the vertical and horizontal scars will remain.
- **Loss of the ability to breast-feed** – There is some risk that you may not be able to breast feed after this surgery. If you expect to have children, discuss this possibility with us.

Common questions asked about Breast Reduction

What are the scars like?

The drawback of breast reduction surgery can be the resulting scars. These can vary depending on the size of reduction necessary.

Will I lose any feeling in my breasts?

Modern techniques of breast reduction concentrate on preserving sensation to the breast. In some instances the sensation may be altered.

Is breastfeeding possible?

Majority of patients can breastfeed after surgery as the ducts leading from the breast gland to the nipple are preserved.

Is it true that breasts can get bigger again?

It is highly unusual for breasts to get larger again. The removal of fat and breast glandular tissue is permanent. If you put on a significant amount of weight it is possible that your breasts will enlarge but the breasts will not enlarge by themselves.

Are there any risks of breast cancer?

No. In fact, there is evidence that the incidence of breast cancer is decreased. This is because some breast glandular tissue that could potentially become cancerous is removed.

How can I help myself recover?

Plan on taking it easy for the first week. Swelling and bruising are common and usually subside within one or two weeks. It is important to wear a support bra 24 hours a day (unless showering) for the first five to six weeks to maintain shape, improve healing and ensure long lasting results. You will return to see us approx one week, four weeks and then at three months.

How long after surgery will I be able to get back to exercise?

A gradual return to exercise is recommended. Brisk walking within two to three days of surgery, progressing to light jogging after around 10 days. It should take at least six weeks to return to vigorous swimming, upper body gym work and tennis. Patients who have this type of surgery find they are far more comfortable jogging and playing sport.

How much time would I need off work?

Everyone is different however most people spend one night in hospital and are back at work within seven to 10 days. This may differ if you have a physical job that involves any heavy lifting.

Patient Aftercare

Once you have been discharged from hospital. It is important that consider the following advice.

- Have daily showers and blow dry your scars dry with a hair dryer on a cool setting.
- Wear your support bra as much as possible for 4 weeks. This will give a much better cosmetic result.
- Ensure you keep well hydrated and eat a nutritious and balanced diet to assist in good wound healing.
- Avoid heavy lifting or over stretching.
- Refrain from gym activities for at least 2 weeks.
- Take regular mild painkillers as required such as paracetamol.

You will have a follow up appointment at one week post procedure to ensure you are recovering well. It is at this point that we will remove all your dressings and provide you with any on going wound care advice.

Lastly, it is important to remember that your breasts need time to settle post reduction and that it takes approximately 3-6 months before you see the end result.