

PLASTIC SURGERY

A boost to your bosom

Gravity, age and breastfeeding can take a toll on a woman's physique, particularly the shape and tautness of the breasts. A breast lift is a popular option to reverse these effects.



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A breast lift is a surgical procedure that raises and firms the breasts and removes excess skin to enhance their shape and appearance. It can help to reverse the effects of gravity, significant weight loss and pregnancy — all of which can cause breast tissue to 'sink' to the lower part of the breast. This droop or sag leaves the upper part of the chest (the décolletage) empty, and the breast and nipple become too low on the chest wall. A breast lift, or mastopexy, redistributes and reshapes the breast tissue to give a more pleasing and youthful breast shape.

Points to consider

It is important to consult a qualified specialist, who can advise if you are a suitable candidate for the procedure. Some questions that might be helpful to determine if you may benefit from a breast lift include:

Do the nipples point downwards?

The weight of breast tissue stretches the breast skin over time, causing the breast to sag and pulling the nipple low on the breast. If you have this condition, the procedure will help.

Do the nipples/areolas sit below the crease underneath the breast?

If the position of the nipple/areola is lower than the crease beneath the breast, the procedure can help as it reshapes and repositions the breast tissues.

Am I happy with my breast size when wearing a bra?

If you are happy with your size when wearing a bra, then the breast lift is all you need. If you feel your size is too small, then you would need an augmentation in addition to a lift. However, if you feel you are too big, then a reduction together with a lift will be beneficial.

The procedure

The surgical procedure is performed under general anaesthesia and takes about three to four hours, depending on the degree of modification and the number of procedures being performed. Excess skin is removed and the surrounding tissue reshaped. Surgical drains will be used; these drains are removed after one to two days. In most cases, patients stay overnight in the hospital and take about one to two weeks to recover. After surgery, patients will need to wear a post-surgical support bra. Sutures are removed after two weeks, and patients can return to work by this time.

The surgical technique used will depend on the size, shape and degree of sagging. In general, smaller breasts requiring less manipulation can be done via shorter incisions, but more significant change in breast shape will necessitate more incisions.





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- **Inverted-T or anchor lift** This popular technique follows the natural contours of the breasts and involves three incisions: around the edge of the areola, along the contour of the breast crease, and between the areola and the base of the breast. This maximises the amount of change and can reduce the size of the breast and areola.
- **Doughnut lift** This is popular for women with smaller breasts. A doughnut-shaped incision is made around the areola, excess skin is removed and the breast tissue is reshaped.
- **Crescent lift** A small, half-moon incision is made above the areola to allow the surgeon to elevate the nipple and areola.
- **Lollipop or keyhole lift** A keyhole incision is made around the areola, and another vertically from the bottom of the areola to the crease under the breast.

In some cases, the breast lift may be combined with breast reduction. This helps to reduce the weight of the breasts at the same time as doing the lift to produce better and more lasting results. Some women can also opt to do the surgery with the addition of implants or fat grafts to add fullness to the breasts.

Parting advice

While a breast lift is akin to ‘resetting the clock’, keep in mind that your breasts will continue to undergo natural changes that occur with ageing. Future pregnancies or significant weight fluctuations can also negatively affect your results. As such, it is best to have a breast lift when you do not wish to have any more children, and to maintain a stable weight. A good support bra is also essential to help maintain the results of the surgery. 