

Breast Mastopexy Information Sheet

Are you thinking about Mastopexy?

If you are considering surgery your plastic surgeon wants you to be thoroughly informed about this procedure. Reading this information is the first step. However a personal consultation with a qualified plastic surgeon is the best way to obtain any additional information you need.

What is Mastopexy?

Mastopexy is an aesthetic (cosmetic) surgical procedure aimed at lifting and reshaping sagging breasts to a rejuvenated shape and contour.

Is Mastopexy for me?

Mastopexy may help if you are happy with the overall size of your breasts but unhappy with their shape in terms of sagging or drooping. You may have noticed this "ptosis" with time or following breast-feeding, loss of weight or with ageing.

Mastopexy lifts and restores the breast into its position and helps improve your overall appearance.

You may be a good candidate for breast lift surgery if you have one or more of the following conditions:

- Breasts that are pendulous, but of satisfactory size.
- Breasts that lack substance or firmness.
- Nipples and areolas that point downward especially if they are positioned below the breast crease.

Sometimes these conditions may be inherited traits. In certain cases the breasts may have developed differently so that one breast is firm and well positioned while the other is not. There may be differences in the size of your breasts as well as their shape. Breasts that are large and heavy can be lifted but the results may not be as long lasting as when the procedure is done on smaller breasts.

Initial Consultation

During the initial consultation you may be asked to point out exactly what you would like to see

improved. This will help your plastic surgeon to understand your expectations and determine whether they can be realistically achieved.

You will be asked about your medical history including previous operations, past and present medical conditions and current medications. In order to provide you with the best information and safest options, it is important that you give your surgeon complete information. The medical conditions that may increase risks of surgery include high blood pressure, thyroid problems, diabetes and bleeding problems.

Preoperative photographs may be taken during your initial consultation or at a subsequent visit. Your surgeon will discuss with you the details of the operation and the possible risks and complications associated with the procedure. At consultation your physical condition and requirements will be considered and the technique that would be best for you will be determined.

Preparation for Surgery

The goal of your plastic surgeon and the staff is to make your surgical experience as easy and comfortable for you as possible. Smokers will be asked to stop smoking 3 weeks before surgery as nicotine in cigarette smoke interferes with blood circulation. Aspirin and some anti-inflammatory drugs used for the treatment of arthritis can cause increased bleeding, so you should avoid taking these medications for 2 weeks before surgery. Surgery is usually performed on an outpatient basis. If this is the case, make certain you have someone to drive you home after surgery and to stay with you at least the first night following surgery.

The day of Surgery

Your surgeon will mark your skin before the operation and if you have not already done so, you will need to sign the consent form for your operation. Preoperative photographs will be taken if this has not already happened.

You will also be seen by the anaesthetist, who will go through your medical history with you again and will explain the anaesthetic procedure to you. Medications are administered for your comfort during the surgical procedure. During the anaesthetic, various monitors are used to check your heart, blood pressure, pulse and the amount of oxygen circulating in your blood.

Anaesthetic

You will be receiving a local anaesthetic with intravenous sedation. Your anaesthetist will discuss with you possible discomforts following anaesthesia. Any questions you have regarding your anaesthetic would be best answered by your anaesthetist at the time of surgery.

Your Operation

Because of individual factors, not everyone will achieve the same results from mastopexy surgery. Your plastic surgeon will select the surgical technique that he or she feels will obtain the best outcome for you.

There are currently several techniques for mastopexy. They all aim to lift and reshape the breasts, and reposition the nipples. If the breast sagging is minimal and the breasts are small, ptosis can be corrected with augmentation mammoplasty. This method causes fewer scars on the breast than mastopexy.

During mastopexy the nipple and areola are repositioned to a higher position and excess skin is removed from beneath the breast. Closing the remaining skin lifts the breast mound to a higher position and re-contours the breast to give it a more projected and youthful appearance.

If there is inadequate breast tissue to fill the skin and achieve the desired size, a breast implant may be placed beneath the breast at the same time achieving the desired size, shape and projection.

How long does the operation take?

The operation takes from 1 to 2 hours, depending on the extent of each case.

After Surgery

It is important to understand that recovery time varies greatly among individuals. When surgery is completed you will be taken into a recovery area where you will continue to be closely monitored. Pain usually can be controlled with oral pain medication. Most of the stitches are dissolvable. If there are stitches to be removed, they will be taken out in 1-2 weeks after surgery.

When can I resume my normal activities?

It is often possible to return to work within two weeks, depending on your job. In many instances you can resume most of your normal activities, including some form of mild exercise, after several weeks. You may continue to experience some mild, periodic discomfort during this time, but such feelings are normal. It is important not to do any strenuous exercise of the upper body and chest as this increases the chances of bleeding. Severe pain should be reported to your doctor.

Any sexual activity should be avoided for a minimum of one week, and your plastic surgeon may advise you to wait longer. After that, care must be taken to be extremely gentle with your breasts for at least the next six weeks.

Results of your Surgery

As the healing process is gradual, you should expect to wait at least several weeks to get an accurate picture of the results of your breast surgery. Incisions will fade over a number of months until they become barely visible.

Risks and possible complications of Surgery

Fortunately, significant complications from mastopexy are infrequent. Every year, many thousands of operations are performed with no major problems and good results. However everyone considering surgery should be aware of both the benefits and risks. The subject of risks and potential complications of surgery is best discussed on a personal level between you and your plastic surgeon.

- Some of the potential complications include **bleeding** and blood accumulation that may need to be drained surgically. The risk of such bleeding is less than 3%
- Although uncommon, (around 2%), an **infection** that does not subside with appropriate treatment may require temporary removal of the implant.
- **Scarring** can be unpredictable and thick, stretched scars may result. Most of these can be treated well by steroid injections and silicone sheet application.
- **Changes in sensation.** The surgery may affect sensation. Sensation may increase or decrease, temporarily or permanently.
- **Dissatisfaction** with cosmetic results. Dissatisfying results may include scar deformities, displacement, migration, incorrect size, asymmetry, and unanticipated contour.
- **Scarring:** Scars are an unavoidable drawback to the procedure, but typically quite acceptable to most patients. The incisions are designed so that the scars will not be visible while wearing normal clothing. The scars will be more obvious in the early months after surgery. These scars will continue to fade over the ensuing 12-18 months. Some patients may have a tendency to form thick or red scars (hypertrophic or keloid scars). These scars can usually be improved by other measures.
- **Swelling and Bruising:** As with all operations, a degree of swelling and bruising will occur usually more significantly in the first 48 hours post-operatively. The swelling usually subsides by the end of the third week.

You can help to minimize certain risks by following the advice and instructions of Dr Peterson, plastic surgeon, both before and after your surgery.

Maintaining a relationship with your Plastic Surgeon

Should there be any questions regarding Surgery be sure they are answered in advance. Well meaning friends are not a good source of information. Find out everything before proceeding with the operation - a well informed patient is a happy one.

After surgery, you will return to your plastic surgeon's office for follow-up care at prescribed intervals, at which time your progress can be evaluated. Post-operative photographs will form a part of the evaluation of your result. Once the immediate post-operative follow-up is complete, many surgeons encourage their patients to come back for periodic check-ups to observe and discuss the long-term results of surgery.

Please remember that the relationship with your plastic surgeon does not end when you leave the operating room. If you have questions or concerns during your recovery, or need additional information at a later time, you should contact your surgeon.