

Breast Implant Removal and Replacement

General procedure information

Breast implants can last for many years, but they won't last forever. Due to this, it's necessary for those who wish to preserve their size to have their implants replaced after 10-15 years.

Some women may choose to undergo breast implant removal while others may choose breast implant replacement surgery, depending on their individual needs. In some cases the replacement of the implants is performed because the patient is unhappy with the result of their original breast enlargement. The patient may wish to have them replaced with larger or smaller implants.

In other cases, a patient can wish to have their implants removed or replaced due to capsular contracture. This condition occurs when excess scar tissue is formed around the implants, which then results in a hard and ball-shaped implant - often with a deformed appearance.

The most common benefits of breast implant revision, whether a patient chooses implant removal or replacement, include an enhanced cosmetic appearance to the breasts and improved physical comfort due to relief from complications like capsular contracture and improper breast implant positioning.

Your consultation

During your consultation, your surgeon will inform you about surgery, ask about your goals for the procedure and discuss what you should expect; also you will receive all the details about the breast implants you should need new ones inserted.

Breast implant revision is not advisable for women who are seeking perfect breasts. After breast augmentation, a woman's breasts should look and feel natural, but perfect shape and symmetry, as with natural breasts, are rare. Women who are dissatisfied with the appearance of their breast implants should consider the risks and benefits of secondary breast augmentation before proceeding.

It is extremely important that you consider all the advice and recommendations of your surgeon, and that you go into breast revision surgery with reasonable expectations.

Preparing for surgery

At your initial consultation, your surgeon will take a complete medical history. Having your surgeon know about your medical background is very important, so please be sure to provide all the information you can.

It's very important that you be totally frank with your surgeon about your expectations and the goals you want to achieve – and equally important that your surgeon be frank with you about your alternatives and the plusses and minuses of each.

If you decide to proceed with treatment, your surgeon will give you specific instructions, including guidelines on eating, drinking and taking certain vitamins and medications.



Nuffield Health Brighton Hospital
Warren Road, Woodingdean, Brighton BN2 6DX
(T) 01273 621 144
(F) 01273 690 670
(E) info@andrewyelland.com
www.andrewyelland.com

Because smoking decreases circulation and interferes with proper healing, your surgeon will also instruct you to stop smoking for a minimum of one to two weeks before your surgery and during your recovery.

Your operation

The surgeon will make an incision either around areola (the dark area around the nipple), underneath the fold of the breast, or under the armpit.

If the implant is made from silicone, the surgeon will check if the implant has burst, prior to removal. If the implant is made from salt water, the implant will be drained, thereby making it easier to remove.

The surgeon will then remove the implants and the surrounding scar tissue, and will then insert the new implants, if desired.

The procedure is done under local anaesthesia with sedation or general anaesthesia, depending on the patient. It can be done as outpatient surgery and usually does not take more than one hour.

Recovery

In most cases, recovery time after breast implant revision is short. Total recovery time varies for each individual, depending on the specific nature of the procedure.

Most women return to work in three or four days and resume normal activity within a few weeks. You may still have some swelling, bruising and discomfort, and the usual complications can arise, such as bleeding, numbness, skin discolouration.

As a general rule, you should refrain from heavy lifting, strenuous exercise, sports, and sex for about three weeks.

Your breasts may be quite sensitive for two or three weeks so you will want to avoid direct stimulation. Once they are no longer sore, usually within three to four weeks after surgery, contact is fine.

Your scars will be firm and pink for at least six weeks. After that they may remain the same size for several months or even appear to widen. After several months, though, your scars will begin to fade, although they will never disappear entirely.

Risks and complications

These procedures carry with them many of the same risks or complications as the original breast augmentation surgery. Complications may include infection, side effects from the anaesthetic used, bleeding, poor wound healing and a poor cosmetic result.

There is a risk of damaging the nerve supply to the nipple area, which can lead to an altered sensation in the area.



Nuffield Health Brighton Hospital
Warren Road, Woodingdean, Brighton BN2 6DX
(T) 01273 621 144
(F) 01273 690 670
(E) info@andrewyelland.com
www.andrewyelland.com

There is a risk of tissue reaction around the implants, as well as tissue death. The implant may burst. This only happens very rarely though, but it could mean that further surgery will be necessary.

No form of surgery is risk free, although severe complications are very rare.

The results of your breast implant revision will depend mostly on whether you choose breast implant removal or replacement, and what kind of complications prompted your decision to have a secondary breast augmentation.