

Male Breast Reduction

(Gynaecomastia)



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WHAT IT IS?

The term comes from the greek words “gynae” meaning “woman” and “mastos” meaning “breast”. In practical terms, this means abnormally large breasts on men. Gynaecomastia is the medical term for this condition.

Gynaecomastia in men is a relatively common and embarrassing condition. It is estimated that between 40-60% of men are affected to different degrees. It is relatively common in adolescent boys, due to hormone imbalance, and in such cases symptoms disappear naturally most of the time. If this does not happen, young men become burdened with a social handicap and can cause deep embarrassment and social humiliation.

The enlargement that occurs in later life is usually due to a deposition of fat in the breasts. This can occasionally be brought on by medication prescribed for other medical conditions or by a hormonal imbalance. Muscular enlargement may also occur in men who undertake body building or rigorous sporting activities if they take anabolic steroids.

Breast enlargement in men can have profound social consequences. Feelings of shame and loss of masculinity are common, and even simple social acts such as taking your shirt off at the beach can cause profound anxiety. Through surgery your breasts really can be restored to normal size and appearance.

WHAT DOES THE PROCEDURE INVOLVE?

The procedure is usually performed either under local anaesthetic with heavy “twilight” sedation, or a general anaesthetic depending on the size of the area to be treated. An overnight stay is therefore rarely necessary and recovery time is greatly reduced. The surgeon will make a small incision at the edge of the aureola – the pink disc around the nipple. In adolescent men the overgrown tissue is then simply excised, in older men liposuction may be used to remove the fat. In this case the surgeon will use a very fine tube (cannula) and a vacuum pump to perform the procedure. In either case scarring is minimal and barely noticeable.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND LIKELY AFTER-EFFECTS?

Cosmetic Surgery, like any other surgery, involves a “trauma” to the human body and there are risks associated with any procedure. Each person’s body is different, and your general health, level of fitness, age and genetic profile will all have an effect on the speed of healing and also on the risk of side-effects.

If you smoke, drink alcohol, are overweight and/or take drugs for medical or other reasons, the risk of complication during and after surgery can be greatly increased. Smoking, in particular, is discouraged because it increases the risk both of infection, wound breakdown and thrombosis (blood clots).

After surgery most people experience a degree of swelling, bruising, tiredness and numbness. A smaller number may also encounter infection and/or some bleeding around the scar area. Regular use of prescribed painkillers is usually sufficient to manage any post-operative symptoms. As with liposuction there is lumpiness and swelling underneath the skin that takes a few months to clear and settle.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER THE OPERATION?

Post-Op

Your surgeon will see you when you have come round from the anaesthetic to check that all is well, and discharge you providing you are fit to return home. You will be given medication and full post-operative instructions along with appropriate telephone numbers in case you need to contact us at any time. A special elasticated garment will have been applied to your chest wall after surgery and this must be left in place for the next 4 weeks. Some pinkish discharge may be experienced.

Week 1 - 2

During the first week after surgery, you should not remove the garment at all. You should try to resume normal daily activities as soon as possible: general mobility will help speed up the healing process. You should NOT, however, undertake any strenuous activity or exercise.

You will see our nurse after 7-10 days so that she can check your progress and remove your dressings and stitches. Bruising and swelling will continue to diminish.

Weeks 8 - 10

By this stage you should be able to see good results but full results will take 6 months to appear. Bruising and swelling will have disappeared. You may find that there is still some irregularity or lumpiness in the chest wall, but this will settle down after a couple of months, aided by regular massage.

You will see your surgeon once more at between 8 and 10 weeks after your operation for a full post-operative consultation.

FULL POST-OPERATIVE COVER

We're confident that you will be delighted with the results. For that reason, we guarantee that we will provide post-operative cover for a full three years after your procedure. It's our way of ensuring that you have peace of mind and confidence in Linia.

PERIOD OF REFLECTION

Cosmetic surgery is a purely elective procedure and careful consideration should be given to both the potential benefits and the risks, before making a decision to proceed. Linia recommends that, following consultation with your surgeon, you allow a period of at least fourteen days before making a decision.

General matters pertaining to cosmetic surgery.

1. Expectations and limitations: Cosmetic surgery may satisfy many needs and often provides inner confidence. It may enhance your quality of life significantly. It is however, not the answer to all of life's problems. It is vital to understand the limitation of such surgery. The purpose of cosmetic surgery is to improve one's appearance. But do not expect miracles. Most patients understand these limitations and have a realistic view of what may be achieved. Wrong expectations and over expectations may lead to disappointment. Being realistic brings satisfaction.

2. General risks of Surgery and Anaesthesia such as blood clots, chest complications, pain and discomfort, infection, swelling, bruising, bleeding and haematoma, seroma, problems in the healing process, numbness, sensitivity etc.

3. Subjective Nature of Cosmetic Surgery: It has been emphasised that, the final assessment of the result is a matter of subjective opinion. Hence, while a probable expected result has been advised, this is in no way a guarantee of a good result.

4. Scars: All surgery involves creating some scars. Although these are placed in locations to hide, any scar, in theory, can become prominent. It normally takes 12-24 months for scars to fade away completely.

5. Time lag for final results: Every operation is followed by a period of healing, before tissues return to normal and the final result is apparent.

6. Numbness: Loss of sensitivity is a consequence of all surgery and it takes time for normal sensation to return.

7. Revisions and Refinements: Every operation may sometimes need more refinement to achieve a satisfactory end result.

8. General Asymmetry: Every human body is asymmetrical between left and right sides. This normal difference will persist after the surgery.

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