

# 6 things you should know when considering breast augmentation



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**1. The truth about implants.** Contrary to what you may think, the majority of plastic surgeons would choose silicone over saline for patients. This prevailing opinion is agreed upon by 9 out of 10 plastic surgeons.

There are two reasons for this. The first reason is that silicone implants are as safe as saline implants. There have been more than 24 studies examining silicone implants, comparing them to saline implants and investigating the diseases that the implants were alleged to cause. There has been no conclusive evidence in these studies to show that silicone implants cause disease.

Let me be clear on this. I am not inferring that implants do not have risk. As with any medical device, or any machine or appliance for that matter, the lifespan of that device is finite. It can and will eventually wear out. No material is indestructible. When the surface of a breast implant wears too thin, the inside material will leak out. If the material inside is liquid saline, it leaks quickly, the implant deflates, and the breast becomes smaller. The saline is absorbed into the

body. The silicone in breast implants is thicker than water; it is a gel that flows with great difficulty. Currently, the implant manufacturers are using gel that is even thicker. They call it “cohesive gel” because it is designed to hold together in case of a disruption in the outer shell.

The second reason for preferring silicone implants is that silicone has a more natural feel than saline implants!

**2. Choosing an implant size that is too big for your body will return to haunt you years later.**

Breast tissues age just like other tissues of the body. The skin stretches out, the fibers that hold the internal tissues together weaken, the milk-producing gland tissue enlarges and shrinks with each menstrual cycle and pregnancy, and the fatty tissue varies with weight changes. My consultation with every patient includes a discussion that specifically compares their body and breast type with the implant size that they might choose.

**3. Is the surgeon peer reviewed?** Peer reviewed means that the surgeon has privileges to *do breast augmentation* at a hospital or independent surgical center. To obtain those privileges, the surgeon is reviewed by other qualified surgeons to assure that he/she performs skilled surgery.

A board-certified plastic surgeon can only be certified in America by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. Other boards certify dermatologists, facial plastic surgeons, cosmetic surgeons, gynecologists, etc. They are not truly plastic surgeons although they may perform plastic surgical procedures and they may refer to themselves as plastic surgeons.

If you decide to work with a surgeon who is not a board-certified plastic surgeon, you should check on the surgeon’s qualifications, such as years in practice and number of these types of surgeries he/she performs each year. There is no substitute for full plastic surgical training.

**4. Who puts me to sleep?** There are several methods used for administering anesthesia. If an anesthesiologist is supervised by an anesthesiologist (M.D.) on the premises, you have nothing to worry about. If the anesthesiologist is supervised by the surgeon or by an anesthesiologist that is not physically present, you should think twice about surgery performed in that location. You want your surgeon to focus on your surgery and not to be distracted by the responsibility of the anesthesia.

**5. Why do prices vary?** There are some things that add cost to the surgery, which are well worth the extra expense. Yes, you can have a breast augmentation without these things, but you will be sacrificing something. The sacrifice may be a safety feature or it may be a less optimal appearance of your breasts.

For example, costs of implants vary depending on the type you choose. Another difference is that an anesthesiologist is not as costly as an anesthesiologist. Some surgeons cut costs in their own operating room by using anesthesiologists. Always consider the “what ifs,” because surgery is not without risk.

Try to avoid shopping for the lowest price. You get what you pay for. Buy the best that you can afford.

**6. Do I like the surgeon?** Answer this question immediately after your consultation. You need to be able to openly discuss exactly what you want. You need to feel that you can ask as many questions as you desire. The intangibles are the dealmaker. Choose a surgeon with whom you can communicate.

If you have made it this far, you must truly be interested in having a breast augmentation. Doing your homework will bring you to the day of surgery with a comforting feeling that the surgery will give you a new figure that will last you a lifetime.

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