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Breast Lift (Mastopexy)

Patient Information Handout

Breast Lift

A breast lift (mastopexy) aims to target descent and deflation of the breasts. Breasts sag as a consequence of age, weight loss, weakening of soft tissues over time, gravity and breastfeeding. You may also notice enlargement of the areolar and the nipple pointing downwards (ptosis). A breast lift redistributes your natural breast tissues to create a more youthful shape as well as lift the nipple back to a more youthful position. In cases where the breasts are very empty, a breast implant or fat grafting can be used at the same time to achieve the desired volume. Usually the final scar is a 'lollipop' or 'inverted-T' pattern, depending on what style of lift you require. A comprehensive discussion of your goals and thorough examination are necessary to tailor an appropriate surgical plan.



What Will It Do?

Breast lift surgery improves the breast contour by rearranging the breast tissue and redraping the skin. This gives the breasts a more youthful shape and lifts the nipple. A breast lift can also reduce the size of the areola, which often becomes enlarged over time. If you are desiring a smaller breast or to fill the upper part of your breasts, fat grafting or use of an implant may be required

Is it Right for Me?

A breast lift may be a good option for you if:

- Your breasts are sagging and have lost their shape and firmness
- Your breasts have flattened or are pendulous
- Your nipples fall below the breast crease or point downwards
- You have enlarged areolas
- Your breasts are asymmetrical, with one hanging lower than the other.

Breast lift surgery is a highly individualised procedure and may not be suitable for everyone. Before you decide on breast lift surgery, there are some important issues to keep in mind:

- It is usually best to wait until breast development is complete and any breastfeeding has stopped before undertaking breast lift surgery
- Large, heavy breasts tend to descend again after a breast lift more rapidly than smaller, lighter breasts. In these cases, a breast reduction may be more appropriate

Will I need Anaesthesia?

Mr. Bunker performs breast lift under general anaesthesia to maximise patient comfort. Modern anaesthetics are safe and effective but carry some risks, which you will discuss with your anaesthetist.

Will I need to stay in Hospital?

Usually only a one night stay is required after breast lift surgery. This means we can monitor for any unexpected postoperative bleeding, ensure any pain is well controlled and remove any surgical drains prior to discharge if safe to do so.

What are the Risks and Complications?

All surgery has risks. There are general risks which apply to all operations as well as specific risks for individual procedures. General risks include:

- Bleeding
- Infection that may require treatment with antibiotics or further surgery in some cases
- Allergic reactions
- The formation of a large blood clot (haematoma) or fluid pocket (seroma) beneath the skin that may require drainage
- Pain, bruising and swelling around the operated sites
- Keloids and hypertrophic scars which are raised, red and thickened scars over the healed incisions. These may be itchy, annoying and unsightly but are not a threat to health.
- Poor healing or wound breakdown
- Smokers are at increased risk of complications from any surgery. It is important to truthfully disclose your smoking status, including 'social' smoking.
- Short-term nausea following general anaesthesia and other risks related to anaesthesia

Specific risks and complications associated with breast lift surgery include:

- Numbness around operated sites or sensory changes to the nipple - this is usually temporary but can be permanent
- Issues with the blood supply to the nipple leading to delayed wound healing, subtotal or complete loss of the nipple (termed necrosis)
- Excessive 'firmness' of the breasts
- Reduction in the ability to breastfeed
- Asymmetry (in size of the breast or the shape and position of the nipple)
- Lumps in the breast due to issues with blood supply (termed fat necrosis)
- Wound breakdown and infection
- Requiring an implant with your lift to provide volume to the breast carries the risks associated with implants. Furthermore, the degree of asymmetry and need for revisional surgery is higher when a breast lift is combined with implants.

Where will the Surgery take place?

Your surgery will take place in an accredited hospital facility.

What do I need to do Before Surgery?

- Due to the recent cosmetic surgery reforms, all patients in Australia undergoing cosmetic surgery are required to undertake a Body Dysmorphic Disorder Questionnaire.

- You will be asked to complete a full medical history. You must list all medications you take including dietary supplements such as fish oil which increase your risk of bleeding.
- Check with your surgeon about your medications as some may need to be stopped. Any additional tests required preoperatively will be arranged by Mr. Bunker or your anaesthetist.
- If you decide to have breast lift surgery, you will need to sign a consent form. Make sure you read the consent form carefully before signing. If you have any questions, please ask them prior to surgery.
- Avoid any strenuous activity or exercise in the week before your surgery.
- Take Vitamin C supplements 1 gram a daily starting at least 4 weeks before your surgery, unless you are allergic or unable to tolerate.
- Make sure you arrange for a relative or friend to drive you to and from the hospital and that you have arranged appropriate help at home including someone to stay with you for the first 24 hours. Think about the setup at home where you will recover – you may want extra pillows, fluids or a toilet nearby and it is useful to have a telephone within reach.
- Purchase any postoperative garments if advised in your consultation with Mr. Bunker.
- Consider work arrangements. Most patients will remain off work for 2 weeks after breast lift surgery. A medical certificate can be supplied to your preoperatively if required.
- You will receive detailed preoperative and postoperative instructions. Follow them carefully.

What do I need to do After Surgery?

- Someone should stay with you on the first night back home from the hospital.
- You can usually drink fluids and eat a light meal two or three hours after surgery. You may have some pain and discomfort, particularly around the incisions. You will receive medications for home (pain relief and antibiotics) as well as detailed postoperative instruction which include how to care for your surgical site, signs which warrant concern, contact information and follow-up instructions.
- No strenuous activity for 6 weeks after surgery. In particular, this involves no heavy use of the arms, no carrying heavy loads, and no reaching high above the head. This can cause bleeding (and implants to move if used).
- Some bruising and swelling is normal and may take a few weeks to disappear.
- Dressings are to remain dry and intact until your postoperative review.

If you experience any of the following symptoms, notify us immediately:

- Temperature higher than 38°C or chills
- Heavy bleeding from the incisions
- Suddenly swelling or dark bruising around the breast
- A change in the colour of the nipples
- Worsening redness around the incision sites
- Increasing pain or tenderness
- Issues with the dressings (becoming dirty, wet or loose)

Will I have Scarring?

Some visible scars are inevitable and, in most cases, go around the nipple, vertically down to the breast fold and in some cases along the fold itself. Mr. Bunker will discuss the placement of scars with you prior to surgery. We offer a range of scar-reduction products which can be purchased at the practice. Refer to your sheet titled 'Scar Advice: for Patients'.

Will I need Revisional Surgery?

Revisional surgery may be necessary to correct minor irregularities.

How much does a Breast Lift Cost?

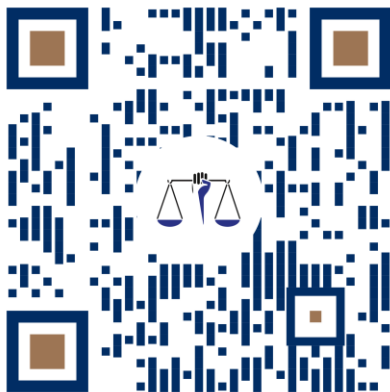
Cost is always a consideration in elective surgery and may include:

- Surgical fee
- Hospital or surgical facility costs
- Anaesthesia fees
- Prescriptions for medication
- Postsurgery garments
- Medical tests

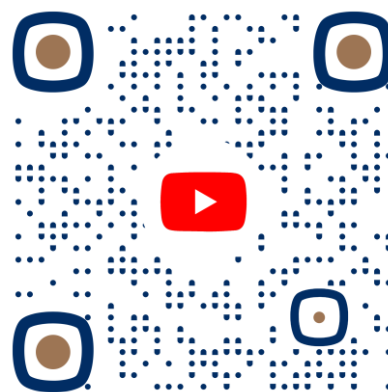
A quote for the surgical fee is provided to you prior to surgery. This also contains instructions on how to obtain quotes for associated fees as listed above. If you have any questions, please contact the rooms or Medibill on the information provided.

Terms you should know

- **General anaesthesia:** Drugs and/or gases used during an operation to relieve pain and alter consciousness. When you are under general anaesthesia you are 'asleep'.
- **Ptosis:** Drooping of the nipple-areola complex.
- **Necrosis:** Death of tissue due to a lack of blood supply.
- **Haematoma:** A collection of blood under the skin or within the tissues which may necessitate open surgical drainage.
- **Seroma:** A collection of clear fluid under the skin.



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