

Considering Breast Implant Augmentation? Here are the 5 Most Important Considerations and What You Need to Know!

Breast enhancement or augmentation with implants consistently remains the most popular of all cosmetic surgical procedures. When performed on the appropriate patient and by a qualified and experienced board-certified plastic surgeon, results are remarkably safe and effective and with a very high percentage of patient long-term satisfaction. Despite the popularity and high interest in breast augmentation, there is also a considerable amount of misinformation and confusion about the indications and most important considerations for this procedure. Here are the most essential 5 things to know:

1) *Is the doctor a real plastic surgeon?*

Most patients are very surprised to know that any physician with an MD degree can perform *any* cosmetic surgical procedures, including breast augmentation, legally in their own facility even if they have no accredited or validated plastic surgery training! A board-certified plastic surgeon must complete rigorous and extensive surgical training, pass comprehensive written and oral exams, adhere to a strict Code of Ethics, complete ongoing medical education and patient safety criteria yearly, and perform surgery only in accredited state-licensed or Medicare-certified facilities. Be careful of confusing marketing and related advertising by physicians who trained in unrelated specialties and are promoted as 'cosmetic surgeons' or other titles that are not recognized specialties by the American Board.

Search below to verify if your surgeon is certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS). Please note that certification is a voluntary credential. By choosing a plastic surgeon certified by the ABPS, you can be assured that the surgeon has completed the appropriate training and passed comprehensive written and oral examinations covering all plastic surgery procedures.

<https://www.abplasticsurgery.org/public/verify-certification/VerifyCert?section=SurgeonSearch#searching>

2) *Be careful of price shopping.... fixing complications and unfavorable results can be very expensive!*

Price shopping can be very dangerous when it comes to surgical and cosmetic procedures. There is almost always a reason why prices are promoted and advertised as significantly lower than the norm....and it's usually related to the doctor's training and experience, lack of specific board certification in plastic surgery, non-certified surgical facilities and lesser quality breast implants.

3) *Trust matters most!*

In addition to finding a qualified plastic surgeon, look for someone who provides all needed and requested information on training and experience, appropriate candidates, medical history and examination, surgical facility and anesthesia, before and after photos of actual patients, and post-operative as well as long term follow-up care. Trust and transparency are essential in the patient-doctor relationship and essential to safe and effective outcomes.

4) *Natural-appearing and balanced results with uncompromising safety should be the goal of every cosmetic surgical procedure!*

The fundamental goals of breast augmentation are improving body contour, correcting asymmetries and consequently increasing self-confidence. The choice of candidates, selection of implant characteristics, size and dimension, incision placement and implant position, and attention to pre-existing asymmetry or other anatomical variations are critical in achieving the best outcomes.

5) *Take your time, and do your homework!*

Just about everyone can have good patient reviews these days, so do some research on your doctor and his training. Be sure to make a check list of all concerns, goals and questions about the procedure and plans. Be sure to look for credible and trusted sources; anyone can post information on the internet and in social media, even if its unproven or self-serving. Since the first breast implant was placed in 1963, there has been over 50 years of clinical and basic science research on safety and implant performance as this has been one of the most studied and researched areas of aesthetic surgery. Take your time and learn from the best sources.... the most informed patients make the best choices and enjoy the most favorable outcomes.

Breast augmentation can result in very high patient satisfaction and consequently improve self-confidence and overall quality of life for many patients. Like every cosmetic procedure, the most important criteria in achieving optimal and safe results are the training, experience and qualifications of the physician or professional performing the procedure. Also keep in mind that although breast implants are FDA approved and meticulously regulated, they are not permanent, and lifelong follow up and yearly examinations are a fundamental and important part of the process.

Additional clinically-proven information and education about breast augmentation and cosmetic surgery can be obtained from the American Society of Plastic Surgery (ASPS) and the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ASAPS).

Sincerely,
Frank Barone, MD, FACS

