A PURELY PERSONAL DECISION

TOOWOOMBA PLASTIC AND COSMETIC SURGEON **DR MARK MAGNUSSON** EXPLAINS THE ADVANTAGES OF CHOOSING POLYURETHANE COATED SILICONE IMPLANTS.

The breast is a very important symbol of femininity and has a strong association with self-image. A breast that is perceived as small can therefore have a significant psychological fallout for a woman.

Some women have small breasts from the outset of breast development. Others will have a size they are comfortable with before pregnancy then suffer from post lactational involution and end with far smaller breasts than pre-pregnancy.

Breast augmentation is an extremely personal decision and there are a lot of people who feel free to offer an opinion. Very frequently, these people do not suffer from having a breast size that does not match their self-image. The problem is one that can only be understood by a woman in this position.

There are three primary implant types used in contemporary breast augmentation surgery: silicone, saline or polyurethane coated silicone.

Polyurethane implants were first introduced in 1968 and there is more than 40 years' experience with this type of implant.

The current range of polyurethane implants used in Australia consists of a smooth capsule cohesive gel silicone implant with a layer of polyurethane foam vulcanised to its surface. If a patient of my practice requests a specific type of implant, it is for polyurethane implants more than any other type.

There are a couple of specific characteristics for which I would select polyurethane coated implants:

- Once in position they don't move, as can occur with smooth and textured implants. Some revisionary breast augmentation surgeries occur for reasons such as implant rotation or downward movement. Polyurethane implants are less likely to have these types of problems and therefore, in patients where this is more likely, a polyurethane implant may be beneficial. This is especially true for patients with a very short distance between the nipple and the fold underneath the breast where this fold needs to be lowered. This increases the possibility of downward implant migration and this is a group of patients that may benefit from such an implant.
- Polyurethane implants are associated with a low rate of capsular contracture (where a collagen-fibre capsule forms in response to a 'foreign object' in the body, tightens and then squeezes the breast implant). Using polyurethane coated implants is therefore one of the considerations for patients with recurrent capsule formation.

POLYURETHANE IMPLANTS

There are two broad categories of implant shape: round and anatomical. Anatomical implants are generally based on a more natural breast shape having more projection 'beneath the nipple', and they don't have a perfectly round circumference. In this way, they more closely match a natural breast shape.

The choice of a breast implant for each individual comes down to a number of factors. Firstly it is important to understand what the patient is trying to achieve in shape and size.

There are also physical factors to consider such as the tightness of the breast skin, the amount of breast tissue present, the presence of breast ptosis (sag) and whether or not a woman has previously been pregnant or breastfed. The individual choice for a patient cannot be generalised without a full discussion and physical examination.

If you are considering a breast augmentation it is important to understand that the surgeon is increasing the size of *your* breasts and not providing you with someone else's.

As an example, two women with a similar breast size may have different chest shapes, a different amount of cleavage to commence with and different amounts of breast sag. Both these women may achieve an excellent outcome for them yet the final result will be individual.

During the consultation process your surgeon will provide advice but you will ultimately choose your own implant size. Your surgeon will help guide you throughout the whole decision-making process in order to achieve the best results possible for you.

BEFORE

AFTER breast augmentation by Dr Magnusson

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