

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Gynecomastia surgery is a procedure to remove excess fat, glandular tissue, and/or skin from overdeveloped or enlarged male breasts. In severe cases of gynecomastia, the weight of excess breast tissue may cause the breasts to sag and stretch the areola (the dark skin surrounding the nipple). In these cases, the position and size of the areola can be surgically improved and excess skin may need to be reduced, leading to additional scarring. Gynecomastia may result from hormonal changes, heredity, disease, or the use of certain drugs; it can present unilaterally (one breast) or bilaterally (both breasts).

There is a variety of techniques used by plastic surgeons to treat gynecomastia. There is often a more solid breast tissue under the areola, which may require excision and biopsy, as well as additional fatty tissue around the chest (often better removed with liposuction techniques). Breast cancer can occur in males, although less frequently than in females, and the solid tissue removed may require pathologic evaluation. Gynecomastia surgery can be combined with other forms of body-contouring surgery, including liposuction, or performed at the same time with other elective surgeries.

**ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS**

Alternative forms of management consist of not undergoing the surgical procedure or wearing undergarments to help mask the appearance of large breasts. In selected patients, liposuction has been used to reduce the size of large breasts. Risks and potential complications are also associated with alternative forms of treatments.

**SPECIFIC RISKS OF GYNECOMASTIA SURGERY**

**Asymmetry:**

Some breast asymmetry naturally occurs in most people. Differences in terms of breast and nipple shape, size, or symmetry may also occur after surgery. Additional surgery may be necessary to revise asymmetry after a gynecomastia surgery.

**Change in Nipple and Skin Sensation:**

You may experience diminished (or loss of) sensitivity of the nipples and the skin of your breast. With some techniques, and after several months, many patients have normal sensation. Nipple graft techniques remove the nipple and replace it as a skin graft. Sensation will be lost with this technique.

**Unsatisfactory Result:**

Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty, expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained. You may be disappointed with the results of gynecomastia surgery. Asymmetry in nipple location, unanticipated breast shape and size, loss of function, wound disruption, poor healing, and loss of sensation may occur after surgery. Healing may result in a lost nipple, thus requiring further surgery and reconstruction. Breast size may be incorrect. Unsatisfactory surgical scar location or visible deformities at the ends of the incisions (dog ears) may occur. Thickened scars and keloids along incisions are possible. Liposuction may be necessary to thin breast tissue that is outside of the normal surgical location for gynecomastia surgery. It may be necessary to perform additional surgery to attempt to improve your results. Unsatisfactory results may NOT improve with each additional treatment.

**Breast Disease:**

Breast disease and breast cancer can occur independently of gynecomastia surgery. Individuals with a personal history or family history of breast cancer may be at a higher risk of developing breast cancer than an individual with no family history of this disease. It is recommended that you seek professional care should a breast lump be detected. In the event that suspicious tissue is identified prior to, or during breast surgery, additional tests and therapy with corresponding expenses may be warranted.