

shapely silhouettes

PERTH COSMETIC SURGEON

DR GLENN MURRAY SAYS BREAST AUGMENTATION PROCEDURES OFFER PATIENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHAPE AND DEFINE THEIR BODY CONTOURS. JESSICA RULE REPORTS.



Elle MacPherson once said, 'I've had two children and no surgery. My body is the result of good genes and a healthy attitude.' While it's a nice theory, unfortunately we don't all boast the genes of supermodels. For the rest of us, body procedures such as breast augmentation can be an effective way to define and shape the body for balance and proportion.

Perth cosmetic surgeon Dr Glenn Murray says breast augmentation is one of the most frequently performed cosmetic procedures today. Women all over the world consider breast augmentation for varying reasons. The main reasons for undergoing breast surgery are: augmentation to increase breast size and or shape; reconstruction following mastectomy; replacement of an existing implant for medical or cosmetic reasons; correction of a congenital deformity.

Dr Murray says he aims to ensure each patient receives the correct treatment type, whether it is a reduction, augmentation, lift or a combined procedure. 'Since the initial surgery in the 1970s, breast augmentation has undergone many variations in procedures and methods,' he explains. 'There has been evolving improvement both in manufacturing processes and surgical techniques. The surgeon/patient relationship has also advanced, with patients becoming increasingly well informed on all aspects of breast surgery.'

Breast augmentation

During a breast augmentation procedure, Dr Murray says he aims to create better shaped breasts, rather than just enlarging them. 'It must be remembered that although breast augmentation is a common procedure, it may not suit some individuals and results will vary,' he says.

Traditionally this procedure has been carried out using a general anaesthetic but more recently Dr Murray has begun using tumescent anaesthesia.

'While an anaesthetist is still present throughout the operation, in most cases I choose to use a tumescent anaesthesia, as I believe the patient experiences less discomfort, bruising and swelling,' says Dr Murray. 'The patient is simultaneously sedated.'

There is a range of implant choices for breast augmentation. Breast implants consist of an envelope that is usually filled with gel. Other features of a breast implant assist with achieving the result the patient wishes, such as the shell, profile, height, shape and size.

'They come in two distinctly different shapes – round and teardrop (anatomical implants) to closely resemble the natural shape of a breast,' explains Dr Murray. 'Opinion differs as to the best to use and the technique is always evolving.'

Silicone was the first type of implant used and first approved for medical use as it caused very little reaction in tissue. 'The consistency of silicone provides for a more natural feel to the breast,' says Dr Murray. 'Silicone is also available in a cohesive form similar to jelly in consistency that should not leak.'

Dr Murray says silicone implants have less risk of ridges and are stable. 'They are designed to give a more natural anatomical form and are offered in a vast range of shapes and sizes that allow the implants to be customised to the patient's desires, breast and thoracic shapes,' he says.

Saline implants have the advantage of being filled with a material that is not foreign to the body as people consist of about two-thirds saltwater. If the casing of the implant should develop a small leak, the saltwater is absorbed by

the body,' says Dr Murray. 'Saline implants also have a lower tendency to develop capsular contracture. A disadvantage to saline is the "slushy" consistency, which only allows for it to be used in round implants.'

'Another of the latest advancements is the Brazilian implant by Silimed, also known as the "Furry Brazilians",' says Dr Murray. Studies have shown one of the biggest advantages of these implants is that they significantly lower the risk of common complications including capsular contraction and displacement.

'Capsular contraction causes the capsule around the implant to become hard and ripple, which can cause discomfort to the patient as well as compromising the breast aesthetic,' explains Dr Murray.

'Secondly, the furry texture of the polyurethane foam that covers these implants also lessens the chance they will rotate or become displaced. An added advantage is that patients now have the option of selecting a teardrop-shaped implant with a significantly reduced risk of it rotating and ultimately having to be removed.'

In terms of placement, a breast implant can generally be placed either partially under or over this muscle. 'This depends on the thickness of the patient's breast tissue and its ability to adequately cover the breast implant,' explains Dr Murray. 'It is the fatty tissue that makes the breast feel soft and gives it its shape, though this also depends on the elasticity of the patient's skin.'

The implant size may be limited by the patient's existing breast tissue characteristics. 'The skin needs to be sufficiently elastic to be able to cover the desired implant completely, otherwise implants may remain visible or palpable below the skin,' says Dr Murray.

'It may not only spoil the cosmetic effect but there may be a greater risk of surgical complications. Any potential limitations should be discussed in detail with the patient during the consultation.'

Breast implants are artificial devices which will gradually age and wear out, eventually needing to be removed or replaced. 'This should be considered after around 10 to 20 years, which is when the risk of problems may

increase,' says Dr Murray. 'How long the breast implant remains without complications depends on the type of implant inserted and the type of surgery performed.'

Breast augmentation surgery usually takes about one to two hours and in most cases patients can return home on the same day. 'For the first two weeks or so patients are required to wear a supportive bra and a breast stabiliser day and night,' says Dr Murray. 'After a few days, most patients should become quite mobile and recovery time usually takes around two to three weeks in most cases.' **acsm**

