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PLASTIC SURGERY

FAQ's about Saline-filled Breast Implants

What are saline-filled breast implants? Breast implants filled with sterile salt water may be pre-filled to a predetermined size, or filled at the time of surgery for minor modifications in implant size. Saline breast implants are used to enhance the natural breast or as a means of tissue expansion following mastectomy or lumpectomy.

Why might saline-filled breast implants be recommended for me? Only breast implants can permanently increase the size of your breasts and bring your body into better proportion. The result for many women includes enhanced self-confidence and a more positive body image.

Who is a candidate for saline-filled breast implants? Although the mean age is about 35, women of various ages from 18-60 elect the placement of implants for many different reasons: breast asymmetry from birth, lack of proportional development, loss of volume after babies and sagging that may develop from gravity may all be reasons for choosing breast enhancement. These factors generally define good candidates for breast augmentation procedures:

- You can clearly define what you hope surgery will achieve for you
- You understand what breast implant surgery can and cannot accomplish
- You accept the potential risks of breast surgery and your responsibilities as a patient
- You are healthy, emotionally secure and you're stable
- You accept that you will need to make healthy lifestyle choices to maintain the results achieved by breast surgery
- You have realistic expectations and are willing to accept minor asymmetries

What should I know about saline-filled breast implants?

- Breast augmentation is generally performed on an out-patient basis
- The placement of your implants may be beneath your breast tissue, partially beneath the pectoral or chest muscle, or combination of the two
- The incision pattern for your surgery will be discussed with you during your consultation. Scars are a normal outcome of surgery and are generally concealed in the breast crease, around the nipple/areola or in the underarm area
- You will return to normal activities of daily living between 24-48 hours with minimal restrictions. Full sports activity - running, jogging, high impact aerobics is usually 4 weeks
- Results are permanent, but weight loss/gain or pregnancy can change your results and normal aging and gravity may affect outcomes
- You will need a capable adult with you for 24 hours after your release from the hospital or recovery center
- All surgeries carry the potential for risks which will be fully discussed with you during your consultation

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Transaxillary or "Scarless" Breast Augmentation

There are two techniques that have become popular in recent years that offer women the option of breast enlargement without any visible breast scar.

* The first, and most commonly performed by Dr. Ringler, is the transaxillary breast augmentation. This procedure utilizes a small incision in the armpit through which a saline-filled implant is inserted. The small scar is hidden in an inconspicuous place and is very hard to detect several months later. With this technique, there may be less swelling and bruising than in some other approaches, thus offering patients a quicker and less painful recovery. This one-hour procedure may allow some patients to achieve a natural result with a minimal scar.

For women who are interested in breast enhancement with no visible breast scar and prefer a saline-filled breast implant, this procedure may be an excellent option.

The second approach to a scarless breast augmentation is the TUBA (trans-umbilical breast augmentation) procedure. At this time, Dr. Ringler and Dr. Bengston do not offer the TUBA technique because it has a higher complication rate and offers less optimal results than the other breast augmentation techniques that we offer.

There are many good options in breast augmentation today; Dr Ringler has over 20 years experience utilizing saline and gel breast implants. If you think you may be interested in scarless breast augmentation with a saline-filled implant, please mention this when you schedule your consultation so that we can be sure you see a surgeon who specializes in this technique.

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TELEPHONE 616.588.2277 FACSIMILE 616.328.8439 2680 Leonard Street NE Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525 WEB www.capsmi.com