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## **Gynaecomastia Surgery (Male Breast Reduction) – Patient Information**

Breast reduction surgery is an option for men with gynaecomastia. It may also be used to tighten the breast area after significant weight loss that has caused the skin to sag.

However, surgery is not suitable for men who have large breasts simply from being overweight.

### **What does Breast Reduction surgery involve?**

Breast reduction surgery is usually done under general anaesthetic.

The surgeon will need to know if you are taking any medication that thin the blood such as aspirin, clopidogrel, warfarin or rivaroxaban or medicines that reduce your immunity or ability to heal.

The operation involves:

- Making a cut around the nipple
- Removing excess fatty tissue with a scalpel (surgical knife) or using liposuction to suck it out (a combination of both techniques may be used)
- Repositioning the nipples if a lot of tissue needs to be removed.

A transverse scar + scar round nipple may be necessary if free nipple grafts are used. This is rare but more likely after massive weight loss.

You'll have dressings over your wounds.

The operation takes about 1.5 hours. You usually need to stay in hospital overnight.

### **What can I expect after Breast Reduction surgery?**

It can take several weeks to fully recover from breast reduction surgery. You may need to take a few days off work. You may have sore, swollen and bruised breasts for a few weeks.

You'll need to wear an elasticated compression garment day and night for 6 weeks after the operation. This helps support your chest while it heals.

How long you need to keep the dressings on will depend on how quickly your wounds heal. After 1 to 2 weeks, your stitches will either dissolve or be removed.

Avoid stretching, strenuous exercise and heavy lifting for 6 weeks after the operation. It will take about 6 weeks until you can return fully to your normal activities.

You can drive again when it's no longer painful to wear a seatbelt, which may be several weeks after the operation.

It can take up to 6 months to see the full results of your surgery.

Most men just have a scar around their nipples. But a large breast reduction may also result in a vertical scar and a horizontal scar across the breast crease (an anchor-shaped scar).

Your scars may take several months to fade.

### **What can happen after Breast Reduction surgery**

Breast reduction surgery can occasionally result in certain issues, including:

- Thick, obvious scarring
- Unevenly shaped breasts or nipples
- Wound healing problems
- Loss of nipple sensation
- Nipple necrosis
- Hollow nipples and areolae

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- Bleeding inside the breast tissue (haematoma) – this usually happens within the first 24 hours after the operation
- Developing lumps, bruising or swelling

Also, any type of operation carries a small risk of:

- Excessive bleeding
- Infection
- An allergic reaction to the anaesthetic
- A blood clot forming in the deep veins

Your surgeon should explain how likely these risks and complications are, and how they will be treated if you have them.

### **Smoking and Surgical Risks**

#### **Smoking increases the risk of complications both during and after cosmetic surgery.**

Chemicals in cigarettes restrict blood vessels and reduce the amount of oxygen carried in your blood. This can affect your safety during the operation and your healing afterwards.

#### **Risks During Surgery**

Smoking can lead to:

- Reduced oxygen delivery to tissues, making the procedure riskier
- Higher risk of anaesthetic complications, including breathing difficulties
- Poor blood flow, which can affect the body's ability to tolerate the surgery
- Increased risk of skin and tissue damage during procedures that rely on good circulation

#### **Risks After Surgery**

Smoking also significantly increases the risk of:

- Delayed wound healing
- Infection at the surgical site
- Poor scarring or widened scars
- Skin or tissue loss (necrosis), especially in procedures involving skin flaps

To reduce these risks, **patients are strongly advised to stop smoking (including e-cigarettes and nicotine-containing products) for at least 6 weeks before and after surgery.** Quitting allows your circulation and oxygen levels to improve, supporting safer surgery and better healing.

### **What if I have concerns?**

You should contact the ER or the ward, as instructed prior to discharge if you have severe pain or unexpected symptoms.

Cosmetic surgery results may not always meet your expectations. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can discuss this with your surgeon.