

COMMON REASONS FOR BREAST REDUCTIONS

MANY WOMEN WHO HAVE OVERLY large and heavy breasts suffer in silence for years and often have to put up with having their complaints dismissed as being frivolous. The truth of the matter is that large and heavy breasts can cause many real problems: problems that range from the physical and psychological to interfering with their chosen lifestyle.

The most common physical symptom that these women would experience would be back or neck ache as a result of the weight of their breasts. Often present for many years, they tend to worsen as time goes by, causing their posture to become increasingly hunched. They also often experience shoulder pain from their bra straps cutting into their shoulders, and rashes or skin infections between or on the undersurface of the breasts. Sporting activities and exercise may also be difficult because of the weight and size of the breasts.

Overly large breasts may also cause psychological problems such as self-consciousness. If their breasts have always been large since adolescence, they may have been teased a lot or heard many negative comments about their size. They also often feel that their breasts are the first thing that other people look at. This causes them to try and hide their breasts by hunching over and wearing loose clothes. They may also avoid certain sports such as running, because these activities draw attention to their size.

These women also have difficulty finding bras that are large enough to fit into and often

end up wearing bras that are too small for them. Finding clothes that fit well may also be difficult, and some intentionally choose looser clothes to hide the size of their breasts.

Breast reduction will help to alleviate many of these problems. Physical symptoms such as the neck, shoulder and back pains will improve or resolve as the weight of the breasts is reduced. These women will also feel more confident of themselves and their bodies. Lifestyle choices are easier - they feel less restricted about exercise, and it is easier to shop for bras and clothes.

In selected individuals, liposuction of the fat in the breast can achieve a small reduction in size. In the majority of cases, however, surgery is necessary to cut away excess breast tissue and reshape the remainder of the breast. During surgery, the nipple-areola complex is also re-sited in a more optimal position on the breast mound, and the overall effect is a smaller, narrower and more lifted breast.

However, women interested in the procedure should note that the amount of reduction possible is limited by the blood and nerve supply to the remaining breast tissue; the desired size may not be possible if it would disrupt the overall blood or nerve supply of the breast. Surgery may also affect the woman's ability to breastfeed, and in a small percentage of women the sensitivity of the nipple and areola region may be adversely affected as well. ■



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