

#4 Breast Enhancement: Defying nature and gravity

Fifty percent of the population has them, and few of us are completely happy with what we have. Either they're too small or they're too big; or one is bigger, higher or lower than the other. Or they're simply not as perky as you'd like them to be.

Even if we're happy with our breasts to start with, time and gravity take their toll. So do pregnancy and breastfeeding, which can deplete fatty tissue and tend to stretch supportive tissue such as skin, ligaments and muscle.

Who decides what perfect breasts should look like? TV and magazines play a role in what we perceive to be a beautiful breast, but norms and ideals vary from individual to individual, and from culture to culture.



Q&A with DR KAREN SNG, Plastic Surgeon

What are the most commonly requested breast enhancement procedures?

Far more women request augmentation than any other breast enhancement procedure. A reduction – which tends to be a more complicated procedure – is less common. A breast lift involves rearranging the existing breasts to sit better on the chest, and removing excess loose skin.

Can anyone achieve whatever size or shape they desire?

No. Whether your goal is to have larger or smaller breasts, your eventual outcome is limited by your given shape and size. That's why proper consultation is extremely important, particularly as many women have a somewhat distorted idea of their bodies. Our goal is to advise the patient on what can be done to achieve a pleasing proportionality for her unique body, and also what can realistically be achieved.

Apart from that, what can be achieved is restricted by the sizes and shapes of the implants that are available. Reductions and breast lifts are subject to similar physical restrictions.

Who is a good candidate for a breast lift?

Naturally smaller breasts tend to drop only slightly during our 30s and 40s; heavier breasts may drop more noticeably. Again, a successful outcome, from the patient's perspective, depends on the individual and what can realistically be achieved. While it addresses the breast droop that has developed over time, patients must understand that the breasts they had in their youth will not be completely restored.

Are the results permanent?

No. Like the rest of our bodies, breasts continue to change and to age, and they will drop over time. So I always recommend that women wear a good bra, especially after surgery. After a breast lift, the droop is more likely to recur in women who have requested implants to achieve a bigger size.

And the cost?

Basic implant surgery costs about \$15,000 all in, including post-surgery follow-ups. Reductions and breast-lifts tend to cost more.

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