

all about implants

NOW THAT WOMEN CAN CHOOSE FROM SALINE AND SILICONE, THE BIGGEST QUESTION IS, "WHICH ONE IS RIGHT FOR ME?" THROUGH CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF YOUR PERSONAL DESIRES, AS WELL AS DISCUSSION WITH YOUR SURGEON, THE DECISION MAY BE EASIER THAN YOU THINK.

DO IMPLANTS HAVE AN EXPIRATION DATE?

Regardless of the type of implant you choose, no breast implant should be considered a lifetime device. This means that it's likely you'll need to have your implants replaced at some point down the line. Although women with saline implants can easily see if one of their implants is leaking, to assess the integrity of silicone implants (and make sure they are not leaking), the FDA recommends MRI screenings every two years beginning three years after surgery.

saline

Saline implants are filled with sterile salt water that can be safely and naturally absorbed by the body in the event of a leak. These implants can be refilled, or filled at the time they are inserted.

PROS Saline implants filled at the time they are placed require smaller incisions, and can be adjusted if one breast needs slightly more augmentation than the other. Dr. Marschall explains, "It's also easier to monitor the integrity of a saline implant's shell: If they leak, they go flat, and you know where you stand."

CONS Saline implants are more prone to rippling that can be seen and felt, and they may feel firmer than natural breast tissue, especially if they are filled to capacity.

silicone

Now available for women over the age of 22, silicone gel implants have come a long way from their predecessors, and are considered a safe and effective option for breast augmentation. Dr. Giese says, "More patients are coming in requesting silicone, and I'd say the vast majority of first-time augmentation patients in my practice get gel implants." Across the country, currently, there are still more saline implants used than silicone.

PROS Patients and surgeons alike report that silicone offers a more natural look and feel. They may also be more appropriate for very thin patients, since silicone conforms better to the natural shape of the body.

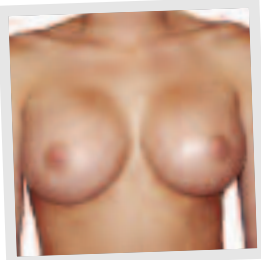
CONS Due to the nature of silicone, if an implant ruptures, you may not know. Silicone implants are also pre-filled, so they require slightly larger incisions to insert. Silicone implants are more expensive than saline implants.

BEFORE AND AFTER BREAST AUGMENTATION

BEFORE

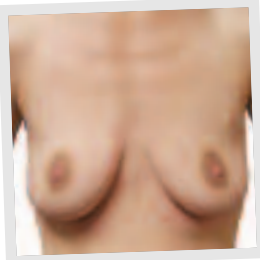


AFTER

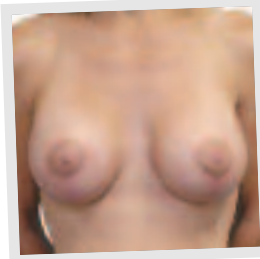


Age 22. After breast augmentation with saline implants.
Procedure performed by Daniel Shapiro, MD; Paradise Valley, AZ.

BEFORE



AFTER



Age 31. After breast augmentation with silicone implants.
Procedure performed by Richard A.K. Chaffoo, MD; La Jolla, CA.