

Open Capsulectomy & Implant Replacement

(Removal, Revision and Replacement of Breast Implants) | Patient Information

What is Open Capsulectomy?

Open capsulectomy is a surgical procedure performed to treat scarring which has occurred around breast implants, or to revise the shape of the pocket where the implant is placed. This involves surgical cutting and removal of scar tissue that has formed around a breast implant and the placement of new silicone gel breast implant(s).

Is the procedure right for me?

A detailed consultation with your consultant plastic surgeon is essential prior to undergoing any surgical procedure. During the consultation, your surgeon will discuss your area/s of concern, desired improvements, options available (including no treatment at all) and expected outcomes. You will be examined, and measurements taken of your breasts. Some discussion will follow about implant shapes and possible sizes and the position of the pockets that are to be made for the new implants to sit in behind your existing breast tissue. Individuals with old, damaged, or broken implants (either saline or silicone gel-filled) may consider open capsulectomy surgery and replacement with silicone gel-filled implants as a way to maintain the long-term results from their original surgery, whether for cosmetic or reconstructive purposes. You may be advised by your surgeon to consider replacing your breast implants with new ones, irrespective of how long you have had them. In some situations, you may be advised to consider breast implants with a textured outer surface or to consider a different type of implant. You will be given a 'cooling-off' period of at least 2 weeks between initial consultation and the date of your operation to ensure you have ample time to reflect on all aspects of the procedure before proceeding (although please bear in mind the waiting lists for our surgeons mean this period is invariably significantly longer).

How are the correct new implants chosen?

Implants have been used for over 40 years to increase the volume and improve the shape of the breasts. It is essential to choose an implant from a trusted manufacturer with the reassurance of an effective warranty and good long term scientific data on safety and durability. A wide range of implants are available that can be used to reshape the breast; from simply adding subtle volume to adding more significant fullness and volume. Implants come in a variety of different shapes and sizes. Usually made from silicone, they can be filled with different densities of gel in order to form an implant that matches your specific needs. In selecting an

implant, your surgeon will carefully assess your breasts, taking note of your chest dimensions and overall build. The surgeon will then discuss your desires for final breast shape and volume, and after thorough consideration, the final implant will be selected. It is never wise to exceed the recommended width of an implant, as this may lead to an unusually proportioned breast with displacement of the nipple from the centre of the breast. Implants are now much more durable and are manufactured to a very high standard. Rigid quality control measures are in place to ensure consistency. Whilst this has made them much safer than in the past, they should not be considered to last a lifetime. Eventually, replacement implants will also wear out and consequently may require replacement. It is therefore imperative that you fully understand the long-term implications of having breast implants. During the consultation process with your surgeon, the likelihood of developing problems will be discussed thoroughly. The most important part of a breast augmentation procedure is the careful planning and implant selection that occurs before the operation itself.

How is the procedure carried out?

Should open capsulectomy with breast implant replacement be agreed upon as the most suitable treatment, the procedure will be carried out by your surgeon in our state-of-the-art operating theatre. The surgical procedure is generally straightforward and takes around three hours to perform. Depending on the extent of the scarring problem, it may be necessary to place the new implant in a different location to the original, partially underneath the pectoralis muscle on the chest, alternatively in front of the pectoralis muscle if the original placement was behind the muscle, or either completely or partially, known as a "dual plane". Incisions for the open capsulectomy procedure may be placed in different locations than those used in the original surgery. Internal stitches are occasionally used to maintain implant position. Once the original implants and scarred skin have been removed and the new implants positioned, skin edges are then closed with dissolvable stitches and very light dressings are applied.

Aftercare

The surgery is usually performed as a day case under a general anaesthetic or twilight anaesthesia. Our highly experienced medical team will be on hand during your stay to care for your needs. After open capsulectomy surgery, it is normal to be a little tender over the chest area. Normally,

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you will need a couple of weeks off work and will need to avoid vigorous exercise for around six weeks. Light exercise may be recommenced immediately. It is common for the surgical site/s to ooze a little, this is usually associated with the local anaesthetic discharging but can look a little pink. Swelling at the treatment site should be expected for at least 10 days. Showering is permitted on the second post-operative day. It is essential to wear the provided post-operative garments during the day and at night in the weeks following the surgery. The implants can take a few weeks to settle into position and it is quite normal for them to look a little high initially. This tends to settle after the first six weeks, but you will not get your long-term result for 3-4 months after the operation as a more natural shape emerges. Scars tend to be quite red in the first 6 weeks, turning to purple over the next 3 months and then fading to white. Most patients will form good quality scars over time.

Risks and Complications

All surgical procedures are associated with risks. Your surgeon will explain these in detail during initial consultation, enabling you to reach an informed decision on whether you wish to proceed. Serious complications are uncommon, however patients should be aware of the following complications prior to undergoing open capsulectomy-

- Anaesthesia risks
- Bleeding
- Infection
- Changes in nipple or breast sensation
- Poor scarring of skin
- Wrong or faulty position of implant
- Implant leakage or rupture
- The formation of tight scar tissue around the implant (capsular contracture)
- Fluid accumulation (seroma)
- Wrinkling of skin over the implant
- Pain, which may persist
- Possibility of further revisional surgery

Other Considerations

- Breast implants are not guaranteed to last a lifetime and future surgery may be required to replace one or both implants
- Pregnancy, weight fluctuations and menopause may influence the appearance of augmented breasts over the course of your lifetime

- Breast augmentation requires regular examinations of breast health to evaluate the condition of your implants
- If the breasts are not the same size or shape before surgery, it is unlikely that they will be completely symmetrical afterward.
- Conditions that involve sagging of the breast or diminished skin tone (stretch marks) may require additional surgical procedures (breast lift/mastopexy) to reposition the nipple and areola upward and to remove loose skin. Additional procedures to internally tighten or reshape the implant pocket may be needed to reposition implants.
- Patients who consider secondary surgery to revise or maintain their results from breast implant surgery must consider that additional surgery may not correct or improve their results

Results

The results of breast augmentation are immediately visible. Over time, post surgical swelling will subside and incision lines will fade. Satisfaction with your new image should continue to grow as you fully recover from surgery. In order to achieve optimal results it is important that you follow your surgeon's post-operative instructions and follow-up visits.

Cost

Prices for open capsulectomy can vary. Costs may include-

- Anaesthesia fees
- Hospital or surgical facility costs
- Medical tests
- Post-surgery garments
- Prescriptions for medication
- surgeon's fee

After consultation and if you are planning to proceed with surgery, you will be given a written quotation regarding the cost of the planned procedure.

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Alternative treatments

Open capsulectomy with implant replacement using silicone gel-filled implants is an elective surgical operation.

Alternative treatment would consist of not undergoing the surgical procedure, using saline-filled breast implants or the transfer of other body tissues to rebuild breast size. Implant removal without replacement is also a surgical option if you elect to abandon the use of breast implants.

If you experience any problems or have concerns following surgery, please do not hesitate to call our direct patient line for assistance on 07908 891059.

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Pre-Operative Preparations

6 week period before surgery-

Patients requiring twilight or general anaesthesia should not travel long haul for the 6 week period before and 6 week period after surgery.

4 weeks before surgery-

Preferably, stop taking the contraceptive pill and HRT 4 weeks before surgery.

2 weeks before surgery-

We would recommend that you start taking Arnica anti-bruising tablets, three times a day, two weeks prior to and two weeks after surgery. These are available from several health and wellbeing stores, including Holland & Barratt.

1 week before surgery-

Avoid Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Nurofen and other similar painkillers one week before and two weeks after surgery. Paracetamol is the safest painkiller to take, if necessary.

Stop taking Vitamin E and its compounds (such as evening primrose oil, fish oils, garlic and garlic capsules) one week before surgery and two weeks after surgery. Taking Vitamin E in any form can cause bleeding and post-operative complications.

1 day before and on the day of surgery-

Shower with Hibiscrub antiseptic liquid soap (provided on prescription from Coppergate Clinic) the day before and morning of your surgery before coming into the clinic. Do not apply moisturiser after showering.

Day of surgery-

You must avoid eating solid food and milky drinks for 6 hours prior to your appointment for sedation. Water, clear drinks, black tea and black coffee can be consumed for up to 2 hours before your sedation/general anaesthetic.

You must take your routine medicines at the usual time, unless advised otherwise and bring them with you (including inhalers).

At least one nail must be free from acrylic or nail polish nails as a monitor will be placed on a finger.

Post-Operative Instructions

Average length of stay-

The surgery will be performed as a day case under a general anaesthetic or twilight anaesthesia unless your Surgeon advised otherwise during consultation. **If you live further than a 1 hour drive from the clinic, it is mandatory to stay in the vicinity until the following day.**

6 week period after surgery-

Patients requiring twilight or general anaesthesia should not travel long haul for the 6 week period before and 6 week period after surgery.

0-2 weeks after surgery

- It is essential to ensure activity is kept to a minimum and to rest as much as possible
- Wear the provided TED stockings day and night, except for when showering
- Shower if you wish, but please be as quick as possible and do not linger. Dressings should be gently patted dry before the compression garment is put back on. At your follow up appointment, your surgeon will guide you on when leisurely showers and baths may resume
- Upper body activities should be kept to a minimum
- Paracetamol can be taken as required

0-6 weeks after surgery

- Wear the provided compression garment day and night, except for when showering (except in the case of teardrop shape implants, when the garment must be worn day and night for the full 12 week period)

2 weeks after surgery onwards

- Gentle activity may resume (for example driving) but do listen to your body- it will tell you if you are overdoing things

6-12 weeks after surgery

- Swimming and more strenuous exercise may resume, as advised by your surgeon at your follow up appointment

12 weeks after surgery

- Underwired bras can be worn if preferred
- The scar and surrounding breast skin can be moisturised daily

General Scar Care

Scars should be supported by micropore tape for the first 2 weeks post-surgery. During this period, tape should be left on during baths and showers and simply patted dry afterwards. After 2 weeks, as soon as the tape naturally starts to become loose, it may be gently removed and discarded.

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