

TREATMENT TIME

FOR BREAST IMPLANTS
OR LIFTS, FALL AND
WINTER MAKE FOR
PERFECT TIMING

BY LARUE GILLESPIE

Everything's bigger in Texas, right? So, if you've been thinking about enhancing your bust line, then fall and winter are a great time to consider it, so you can have that downtime to be camouflaged beneath cold-weather attire.

"Colder weather months are a good time to undergo surgery," said Constance M. Chen, MD, FACS, a board certified plastic surgeon (ConstanceChenMD.com) practicing in New York. "While healing time is the same in the summer as in the

winter, surgical garments and healing are better concealed under layers of clothing."

According to the American Society for Plastic Surgeons, 300,378 breast augmentations were performed in 2017, up 3 percent from last year and up 41 percent overall since 2000. Breast augmentations continue to be the number one requested procedure in cosmetic surgery, so the trend looks like it is here to stay. Interestingly, there were 105,219 breast lifts done in 2017. What we

don't know is how many of those lifts were augmented and how many were just lifts.

Typically, a lift is an option women can choose if they have sagging breasts due to weight loss, breastfeeding, or something else, and they just want to have perkier breasts again. Lifts don't necessarily make your breasts bigger. Lifts with implants do.

SO, WHICH TYPE OF BUST-ENHANCING PROCEDURE IS RIGHT FOR YOU? HERE IS A BREAKDOWN:

Breast Augmentation: "If you have perky breasts that you want to be bigger, then breast implants may be a solution for you," said Dr. Chen.

Breast augmentations can be handled in many different ways, but most experts agree inserting the implants through the periareolar (in the areola skin border) or the inframammary fold (crease under your breast) are the best and safest ways to go.

Breast Augmentation with a Lift: "If you have droopy breasts that you want to be bigger, then [augmentation with a lift] is the way to go," Dr. Chen said.

For this procedure, implants are inserted and the breasts tightened by excising excess skin. Lifts can leave scarring, but if you care for them properly, follow post-op instructions, and possibly use scar-reducing serums or laser therapy, they will be much less noticeable over time.

Several variables are taken under consideration when it comes to choosing the right breast-enhancing procedure. They include nipple position, breast width, droop, as well as the desired size. It is best to discuss your options thoroughly with a physician who is board certified and well experienced.

One last piece of advice: "Select the right size implant for your body and anatomy," said Rady Rahban, MD, FACS, a board certified plastic surgeon based in Beverly Hills, CA. "Too often patients select a breast size based upon their desire and some surgeons will facilitate it, but that only leads to complications like bottoming out, loss of sensation, and rippling. It is really important to respect your anatomy." 

WHEN A LIFT IS ALL YOU NEED

Maybe you don't want to go bigger. Or maybe you don't want to deal with the complications of having implants. A lift may be all you need. "In situations like this, the existing volume can be lifted, and the skin tightened around it," said Oren M. Tepper, MD, Director of Aesthetic Surgery, Montefiore, and an Assistant Professor of Plastic Surgery, Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

There are many options for lifts, including lollipop, anchor, and circumareolar (circular incision around the nipple). If only a small amount of skin tightening is required, a circular incision around the nipple ("circumareolar") could be performed. In cases where more skin tightening is required, a lollipop lift (incision around the areola and down vertically to the inframammary fold), might be necessary. For significant skin tightening, an "anchor" incision may be required, which includes the lollipop in addition to an incision across the bottom fold of the breast.

"At 36 years old, after breastfeeding my two kids, I just wanted to be fixed. I wanted my nipples off my stomach and to be able to wear the dresses and swimsuit I used to wear pre-kids," said Bethany, a patient of Dr. Tepper's. "I have nothing against implants—my family and close friends have them and are very happy—but for me, I didn't need them. I love that I look completely natural and I'm fixed! I can wear anything I want now and I'm back to normal!"



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