

a matter of choice

Breast augmentation patients must be offered enough choice to feel confident with the procedure, Sydney plastic surgeon **Dr Jake Lim** tells Caroline Warnes.

Breast augmentation is one of the most commonly performed cosmetic procedures, however most patients still need assurances when it comes to their own operation.

Many surgeons believe the best way to alleviate concerns patients may have is to consult with each extensively and explain what the process involves and what risks they may face.

It's also important to offer patients as many choices as possible to reassure them they will be getting close to the results they want, Sydney plastic surgeon Dr Jake Lim believes. 'Breast augmentation is a very specific procedure that must be individualised for each patient,' Dr Lim says. 'Everybody has their own idea of what they want

their breasts to look like, so we always take that into account as much as possible.'

Dr Lim consults extensively with patients to discover exactly what it is they are hoping to achieve from the surgery, in terms of changes to the size and shape and whether they want natural-looking breasts or ones that appear more obviously operated on. He then involves the patient in the process of selecting the implant.

'I use a mixture of implants in my surgery,' Dr Lim says. 'This means that the patient has the most choice because there's a whole range for them to choose from.'

'For example, some patients may want more filling in the upper part of the breast, in which case I would recommend a round implant or perhaps one with a high profile for more

projection. Some may want a more natural look with more size, so then I'd recommend using a teardrop.'

Dr Lim always ensures that the decision in regards to selecting an implant is ultimately the patient's, with some expert advice from him.

'I let my patients decide what size they're comfortable with, but I guide them to make sure it's not completely out of proportion to their body,' he says.

It's not just in the selection of the implant where the patient has input. Dr Lim also discusses with patients where the incision is to be made.

'The three most common incisions are underneath the breast crease, in the nipple and in the armpit,' he says. 'I talk my patients through these options and give them a choice, though generally I think that the breast crease incision gives the best result because the scar tends to blend into the fold.'

Another decision to be made in every breast augmentation is implant placement, and it's generally surgeons who make this decision, Dr Lim explains.

'The implants can be placed either behind or in front of the pectoral muscle,' he says. 'This is usually decided by how much tissue the patient has. If the person has a lot of

tissue, you can place the implant in front of the muscle and still achieve a result that looks and feels natural. 'However, if the patient doesn't have much tissue, I put it behind the muscle so it's more natural.'

Placing the implant in front of the muscle tends to be a little less painful in the first week of recovery, but after the first week the difference is not noticeable, Dr Lim believes.

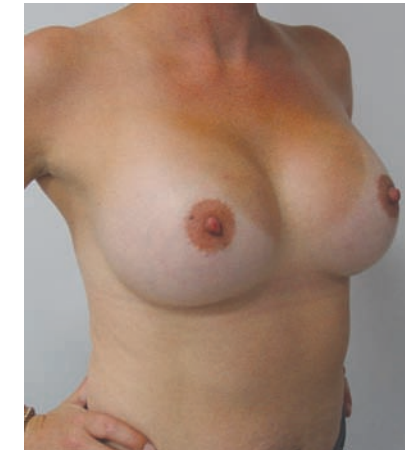
Dr Lim mainly sees breast augmentation patients in two age groups. 'The first group is women in their 20s who are not satisfied with the size of their breasts, while the second group is women who are post-natal and have noted a change in the size and shape of their breast after nursing a child,' he says. 'Usually they've lost volume and want to get it back.'

'The common factor between these two groups is that all patients want the procedure to feel better about themselves and improve their self-confidence.'

No matter what their motives for seeking breast augmentation, most patients are comforted by the thought that there are surgeons who will offer them choices to help achieve the bust that they feel is the best for their figure. **acsm**



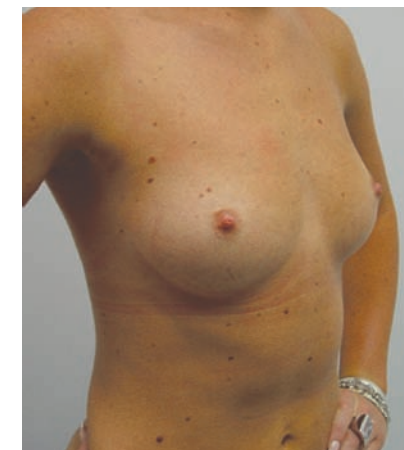
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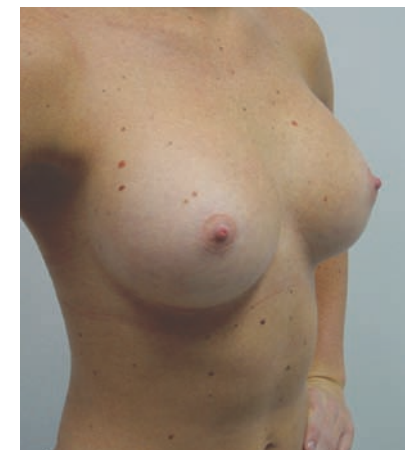
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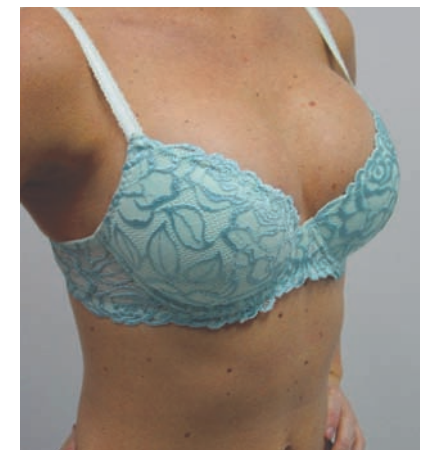
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