

# MALE BREAST REDUCTION

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AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
PLASTIC SURGEONS •

# What is Male Breast Reduction?

Male breast reduction surgery, also known as reduction mammoplasty, reduces breast size while flattening and enhancing the chest contours. It is a plastic surgery meant to correct gynecomastia, a condition of over-developed or enlarged breasts in men that can occur at any age.

The condition can be the result of hormonal changes, heredity, obesity, or the use of certain drugs. The weight of excess breast tissue may cause the breasts to sag and stretch the areola (the dark skin surrounding the nipple). Gynecomastia can cause emotional discomfort and impair your self-confidence.

## **Gynecomastia is characterized by:**

- Excess localized fat
- Excess glandular tissue development
- Excess breast skin
- Presence unilaterally (one breast) or bilaterally (both breasts)

## **Male breast reduction surgery is a good option if:**

- You are physically healthy and of relatively normal weight
- You have realistic expectations, a positive outlook, and/or specific goals in mind for improving the physical symptoms of gynecomastia
- Your breast development has stabilized
- You are bothered by the feeling that your breasts are too large
- Your condition cannot be corrected through alternative medical treatments
- You are a healthy individual who does not have a life-threatening illness or medical conditions that can impair healing
- You are a non-smoker and non-drug user



# Consultation & Preparing for Surgery

## Be prepared to discuss the following during your consultation:

- Your reasons for wanting to have surgery, your expectations, and your desired outcome
- Medical conditions, family history, drug allergies, and medical treatments
- Your current medications and drug allergies; any vitamins or herbal supplements you take; and any alcohol, tobacco, vaping, or drug use
- Previous surgeries

## Your plastic surgeon will also:

- Evaluate your general health status and any pre-existing health conditions or risk factors
- Perform diagnostic testing to determine the underlying cause of gynecomastia; this may include testing of your endocrine function
- Examine your breasts and may take detailed measurements of their size and shape, skin quality, and placement of your nipples and areolas
- Take photographs for your medical records
- Discuss your options
- Recommend a course of treatment
- Discuss likely outcomes of gynecomastia correction and any risks or potential complications
- Discuss the use of anesthesia during your procedure



**Male breast reduction surgery may be performed in an accredited outpatient facility, an ambulatory surgical center, or a hospital. Prior to surgery, you may be asked to:**

- Have a physical examination, including lab work
- Take certain medications or adjust your current medications
- Stop smoking or vaping\*
- Avoid taking aspirin and certain anti-inflammatory drugs, as they can increase bleeding

*\*Smoking decreases blood flow, which can impede wound healing and increase the risk of infection.*

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Be sure to ask your plastic surgeon questions. It's very important to understand all aspects of your male breast reduction surgery, especially regarding your personal health history. It's natural to feel some anxiety, whether it's excitement for your anticipated new look or a bit of preoperative stress. Don't be shy about discussing these feelings with your plastic surgeon.

# The Procedure

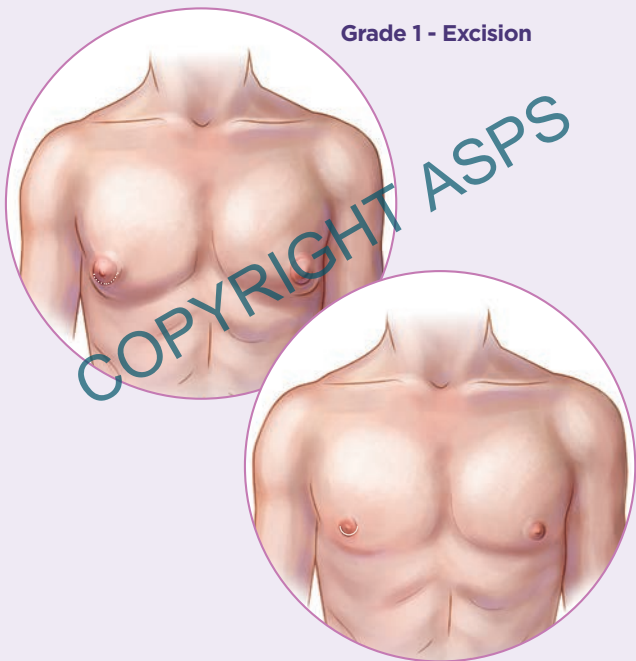
## Anesthesia

Medications are administered for your comfort during the surgical procedures. The options include intravenous sedation and general anesthesia. Your doctor will recommend the best option for you.

## Excision

Excision techniques are recommended where glandular breast tissue or excess skin must be removed to correct gynecomastia. Excision also is necessary if the areola will be reduced or the nipple will be repositioned to a more natural male contour. Incision patterns vary depending on the specific conditions and surgical preference.

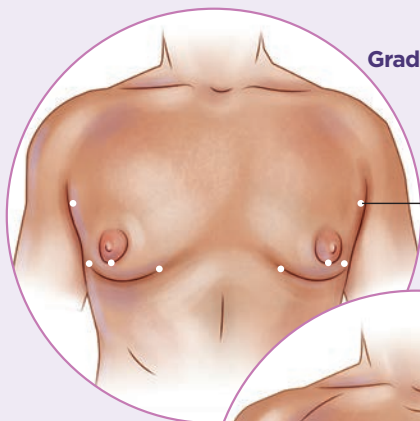
### Grade 1 - Excision



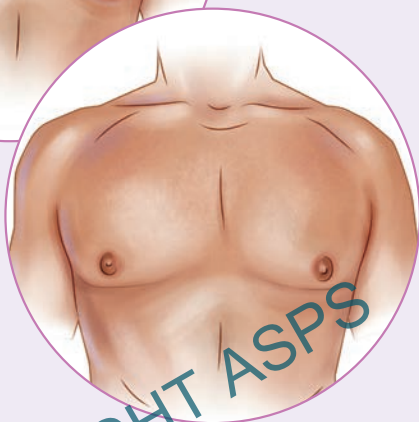
## Liposuction

In cases where gynecomastia is primarily the result of excess fatty tissue, liposuction techniques alone may be used. This requires insertion of a cannula, a thin hollow tube, through several small incisions. The cannula is moved back and forth in a controlled motion to loosen the excess fat, which is then removed from the body by vacuum suction. There are various liposuction techniques that may be used; the technique most appropriate in your case will be defined prior to your procedure.

**Grade 2 - Liposuction**



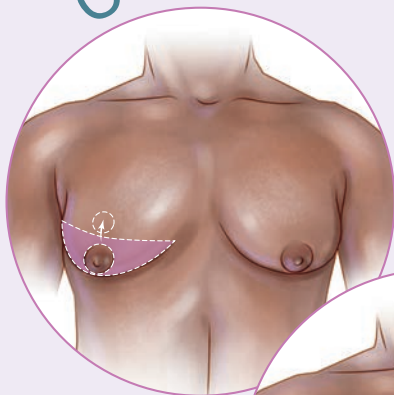
Port sites



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Sometimes gynecomastia is treated with both liposuction and excision.

**Grade 3 -  
Liposuction &  
Excision**



# Risks & Safety

The decision to have breast reduction is extremely personal. You will have to decide if the benefits will achieve your goals and if the risks and potential complications are acceptable. Your surgeon should review with you the relevant risks for your specific procedure. You may be asked to sign a consent form to ensure that you fully understand the procedure and any risks and potential complications. You should feel free to ask any questions to help you understand those risks.





### **Risks can include:**

- Reactions to tape, suture materials, glues, topical preparations, or injected agents
- Anesthesia risks
- Bleeding (hematoma)
- Blood clots
- Breast asymmetry
- Breast contour and shape irregularities and changes in nipple or breast sensation may be temporary or permanent
- Damage to deeper structures – such as nerves, blood vessels, muscles, and lungs – can occur and may be temporary or permanent
- Deep vein thrombosis, cardiac, and pulmonary complications
- Fatty tissue found in the breast might die (fat necrosis)
- Fluid accumulation (seroma)
- Infection
- Persistent pain
- Poor wound healing
- Possibility of revisional surgery
- Unfavorable scarring

All risks will be fully discussed prior to your consent. It is important that you address all your questions directly with your plastic surgeon.

# Recovery & Results

After surgery, dressings or bandages will be applied to your incisions and an elastic bandage or support garment may be used to minimize swelling and support your new chest contour as it heals. A small, thin tube may be temporarily placed under the skin to drain any excess blood or fluid that may collect.

## **You will be given specific instructions that may include:**

- How to care for your surgical site(s) following surgery
- Medications to apply or take orally to aid healing and reduce the risk of infection
- Specific concerns to look for at the surgical site or in your general health
- When to follow up with your plastic surgeon

## **Be sure to ask your plastic surgeon specific questions about what you can expect during your individual recovery period.**

- Where will I be taken after my surgery is complete?
- What medication will I be given or prescribed after surgery?
- Will I have dressings/bandages after surgery?
- When will they be removed?
- When can I resume normal activity and exercise?
- When do I return for follow-up care?

# Results

The results of your breast reduction surgery are immediately visible. Over time, post-surgical swelling will resolve and incision lines, while permanent, will fade. Satisfaction with your new image should continue to grow as you recover from surgery. The final results of your breast reduction will appear over the next few months.

Any surgical treatment to correct gynecomastia will require incisions. While most incision lines are concealed within natural contours, some may be visible and are a necessary result of breast reduction surgery.



Recovery Period	What to expect
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pain, swelling, and bruising are common</li><li>• Dressings may need to be changed</li><li>• Wear a compression garment to reduce swelling</li><li>• Avoid strenuous physical activity</li></ul>
Week 2	<p>Swelling and bruising should begin to subside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to wear a compression garment</li><li>• Return to light activities</li></ul>
Week 3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The surgical area should continue to heal</li><li>• Any remaining bruising and swelling should diminish</li><li>• Return to normal activities, avoiding heavy lifting or strenuous exercise</li><li>• Continue to wear a compression garment if advised by your doctor</li></ul>
Week 5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The surgical area should be fully healed</li><li>• Stop wearing the compression garment as advised</li><li>• Resume normal activities and exercise</li><li>• Regular follow-up appointments to monitor the healing process</li></ul>

# Cost

Prices for male breast reduction surgery can vary. A surgeon's cost may be based on their experience, the type of procedure used, and geographic office location.

## Cost may include:

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

Male breast reduction surgery is not often eligible for insurance coverage, however each insurance policy varies. Your plastic surgeon may need to get approval from your insurance company. This process may involve submitting a letter and photos. Once the authorization is granted, you can proceed with scheduling the surgery, but keep in mind that you will still be responsible for any co-payments or deductibles set by your insurance. If your insurance does not cover the procedure, you will have the option to pay for it out of pocket.

## Your satisfaction involves more than a fee:

When choosing a plastic surgeon for male breast reduction, remember that the surgeon's experience and your comfort with them are just as important as the final cost of the surgery.

# Words to know

- **Areola:** Pigmented skin surrounding the nipple.
- **Bilateral gynecomastia:** A condition of over-developed or enlarged breasts in men affecting both breasts.
- **Endocrine system:** A group of glands that make hormones which help to control activities in your body such as reproduction, metabolism, growth, and development. Testing of your endocrine system may be done to look for signs of diabetes, thyroid disorders, growth hormone deficiency, osteoporosis, hypertension, and obesity.
- **Excision:** Surgical removal of skin or other tissue.
- **General anesthesia:** Drugs and/or gases used during an operation to relieve pain and alter consciousness.
- **Hematoma:** Blood pooling beneath the skin.
- **Intravenous sedation:** Sedatives administered by injection into a vein to help you relax.
- **Liposuction:** Also called lipoplasty or suction lipectomy, this procedure vacuums out fat from beneath the skin's surface to reduce fullness.
- **Local anesthesia:** A drug injected directly to the site of an incision during an operation to relieve pain.
- **Reduction mammoplasty:** The surgical removal of breast tissue to reduce the size of breasts.
- **Sutures:** Stitches used by surgeons to hold skin and tissue together.
- **Unilateral gynecomastia:** A condition of over-developed or enlarged breasts in men affecting just one breast.

# Questions to ask my plastic surgeon

- Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
- Are you a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons?
- Were you trained specifically in the field of plastic surgery?
- How many years of plastic surgery training have you had?
- Do you have hospital privileges to perform this procedure? If so, at which hospitals?
- Is the office-based surgical facility accredited by a nationally- or state-recognized accrediting agency, or is it state-licensed or Medicare-certified?
- Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- What will be expected of me to get the best results?
- Where and how will you perform my procedure?
- What surgical technique is recommended for me?
- How long of a recovery period can I expect, and what kind of help will I need during my recovery?
- What are the risks and complications associated with my procedure?
- How are complications handled?
- What are my options if I am dissatisfied with the outcome?
- Do you have before-and-after photos I can look at for this procedure and what results are reasonable for me?

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# Make the Right Choice

Plastic surgery involves many choices. The first and most important is selecting a member of the **American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS)**.

## **ASPS member surgeons meet rigorous standards:**

- Board certification by the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS)<sup>®</sup> or in Canada by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada<sup>®</sup>
- Complete at least six years of surgical training following medical school with a minimum of three years of plastic surgery residency training
- Pass comprehensive oral and written exams
- Graduate from an accredited medical school
- Complete continuing medical education, including patient safety each year
- Perform surgery in accredited, state-licensed, or Medicare-certified surgical facilities

## **Do not be confused by other official-sounding boards and certifications.**

The ABPS is recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), which has approved medical specialty boards since 1934. There is no ABMS-recognized certifying board with “cosmetic surgery” in its name. By choosing a member of The American Society of Plastic Surgeons, you can be assured that you are choosing a qualified, highly trained plastic surgeon who is board certified by the ABPS or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.



## AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLASTIC SURGEONS®

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