

breast rejuvenation options

Queensland cosmetic doctor **Dr John Flynn** discusses procedures for achieving more youthful breast contours. Gillian Samuel reports.



‘Anti-ageing is the new frontier in cosmetic practice,’ according to Queensland cosmetic doctor Dr John Flynn. ‘We are constantly being given new arrays of options to address signs of ageing.’

He says these advances are often focused on facial enhancements and general body health but age-related changes also occur in the breast. ‘It is important to consider how to address these in a rejuvenation sense.’

While the popular conception of breast surgery is that it usually applies to younger women, there are a number of issues associated with ageing that affect the breasts.

‘The issues to consider are loss of volume, the texture and tone of breast tissue and the inevitable sagging of the breasts,’ says Dr Flynn. All women will be affected by some of these issues at some stage of their lives because of the ageing process, he adds.

There are various approaches to correct these problems and some can be combined to provide solutions in certain cases. ‘Certainly restoring volume using breast implants is a key measure, however, there are times when lifting and tightening of the breast tissue is of equal importance and sometimes I perform a combination of these procedures,’ he says.

The overall purpose, says Dr Flynn, is to create body balance, where the proportions are in harmony.

Volume restoration

According to Dr Flynn, a breast implant is the obvious solution to volume restoration. ‘Much has been written about the different shapes and styles of implants available, and the reason there are so many options to choose from is because breast augmentation is not a one-size-fits-all issue,’ he says.

‘There needs to be a variety of shapes and sizes to choose from because each woman is different and it is important to find a solution to suit every individual.’

Dr Flynn says there are further choices in terms of the surface of the implant, namely whether to use a smooth or textured finish. ‘Each has its own advantages and disadvantages,’ he says. ‘An exciting recent development is the polyurethane (foam) covered implant, sometimes referred to as the new Brazilian.’

The use of ‘furry’ textured implants developed in Brazil seems to indicate a reduction in the incidence of capsular contracture of approximately 1 to 2 percent, Dr Flynn says.

‘This is the most troublesome complication associated with breast implant procedures, which occurs in 7 to 10 percent of cases,’ he says. ‘Capsular contracture is what can make the breasts feel hard and uncomfortable, and a ball-like appearance can develop. Some people with capsular contracture will need further corrective surgery.’

Placement of the implant is another critical factor. The surgeon should discuss with the patient whether the implant should be placed under or over the muscle, or if the dual plane technique, where the upper part of the implant is under the muscle and the lower part above it, should be used.

‘All of these issues should be addressed during consultation with the doctor,’ Dr Flynn stresses.

Breast tone and sagging

‘Sometimes, if there is sufficient volume remaining in the breast, a procedure called a mastopexy can be used to lift the breast. By doing this the available breast tissue can be compressed and lifted to help restore a fullness of texture and tone,’ Dr Flynn says. ‘The lifted breasts will have a more pert, youthful appearance.’

He says there are various methods for achieving this but patients do need to be aware that mastopexy involves a different type of scarring from breast implant surgery. ‘Typically, the surgical approach is through an incision around the nipple, and in some cases there may also be a vertical scar from the nipple to the inframammary fold (the breast crease).’

Size reduction

‘Many articles published about breast sagging concentrate on increasing volume by using implants, but there is also a large number of women with the opposite problem of too much breast tissue,’ Dr Flynn says. ‘This can be accentuated as they grow older, partly due to genetic background and family history and partly due to certain hormonal effects.’

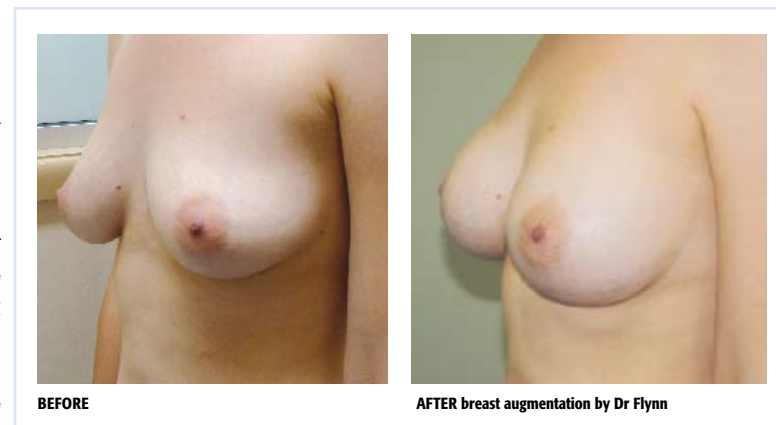
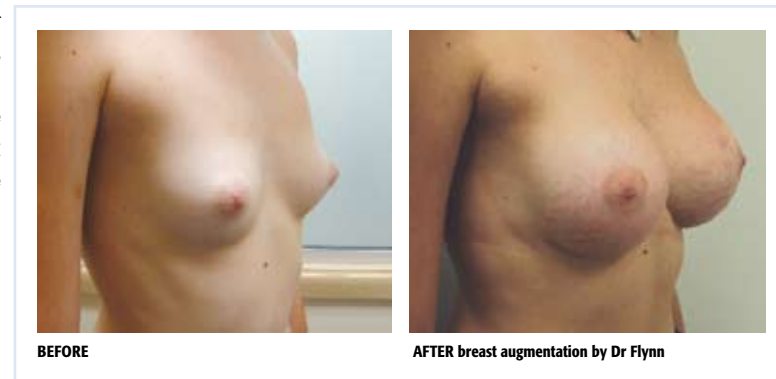
The larger volume of the breast creates a greater weight which can present its own problems. ‘Shoulder pain, neck pain and headaches can be cause for concern, quite distinct from cosmetic considerations,’ he says.

According to Dr Flynn, there is a range of procedures available similar in nature to a mastopexy to reduce overly large breasts. ‘In this circumstance the procedure also involves considerable volume reduction and this is called a reduction mastopexy,’ he says.

As well as removing excess bulk and weight from the breasts, Dr Flynn says it is also important to lift the breast to restore a more pert and youthful appearance.

Body balance

The overall aim of breast rejuvenation procedures is to balance the body’s proportions into a pleasing feminine



silhouette, Dr Flynn says. ‘We recognise that patients may differ in what they regard as ideal body proportions, so this is something that needs to be discussed with their chosen doctor at consultation,’ he says.

One thing to consider is the effect of reducing abdominal girth through liposuction. ‘The cosmetic benefits of breast surgery can be greatly enhanced by skimming excess fat off the tummy,’ Dr Flynn says.

‘Improvements can also be made by using liposuction to re-contour the hips, thighs and buttocks,’ he says. ‘The ultimate aim is to improve body symmetry and proportion and achieve a pleasing form.’

Whether augmenting or reducing parts of the body, Dr Flynn says it is critically important to maintain an eye for total body balance as this concept is central to successful cosmetic surgery. **acsm**