

Gynaecomastia Surgery

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This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

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What is gynaecomastia?

Gynaecomastia is a condition where too much breast tissue has developed. The condition can be severe and can affect one or both sides of your chest.

Is gynaecomastia surgery suitable for me?

For most teenagers, gynaecomastia goes away as your hormone levels naturally get into balance. However, in some men the condition is permanent.

Gynaecomastia is not life-threatening but you may want to have treatment if you feel embarrassed by the condition.

What are the benefits of surgery?

Your chest should have a more male appearance and both sides should look similar to each other.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

If the condition is in its early stages, you may be able to take medication to prevent further growth.

If you are overweight and your gynaecomastia is caused mainly by fatty tissue, losing weight may lead to a reduction in the gynaecomastia.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic but various anaesthetic techniques are possible.

The operation usually takes 30 minutes to an hour for each side that needs to be treated.

If you have only a small amount of excess fatty tissue and good skin elasticity, the operation may involve only liposuction. Your surgeon will use a cannula (thin, hollow tube) attached to a suction device to remove the fat through a small cut.

They will make one or two small cuts on a crease line on the inside or outside of your chest.

Your surgeon will move the cannula through the tissue. Your surgeon will move the cannula at different angles so the tissue is removed as evenly as possible.

For severe gynaecomastia, where there is a lot of excess skin, there are several different options. Your surgeon will discuss what they think may be the best option for you.

How can I prepare myself for the operation?

If you smoke or use nicotine products, stopping smoking at least 6 weeks before and for 6 weeks after surgery may reduce your risk of developing complications and will improve your long-term health.

Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications if you are overweight.

Regular exercise should help to prepare you for the operation, help you to recover and improve your long-term health. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Speak to the healthcare team about any vaccinations you might need to reduce your risk of serious illness while you recover. When you come into hospital, practise hand washing and wear a face covering when asked.

What complications can happen?

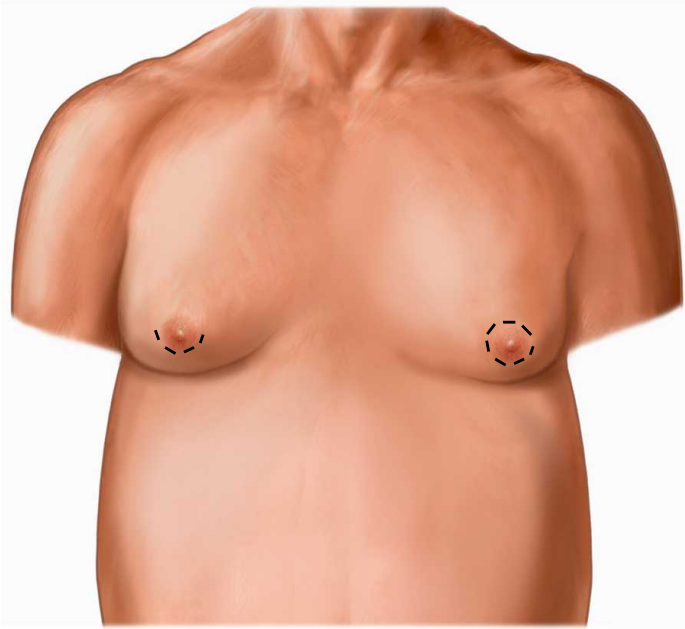
Some complications can be serious and can even cause death.

General complications of any operation

- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- Venous thromboembolism (VTE). This is a blood clot in your leg (deep-vein thrombosis – DVT) or one that has moved to your lung (pulmonary embolus)
- Chest infection

Specific complications of this operation

- Small skin burns
- Changes to skin colour
- Irregular body shape



Position of cuts to remove disc of tissue

- Fat embolus
- Injury to small nerves
- Developing a collection of fluid under your skin
- Developing a collection of blood under your skin
- Loss of skin, including the areola and nipple if you have severe gynaecomastia
- Developing an abscess (a collection of pus)
- Change of nipple sensation
- Stiff shoulder
- Cosmetic problems

Consequences of this procedure

- Pain
- Unsightly scarring of your skin

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day if you had only liposuction, or the next day when any drains have been removed.

You should be able to return to work after a week, depending on your type of work.

Most men return to normal activities after 4 to 6 weeks.

The healthcare team will advise you on exercising to help keep you to a healthy weight and to improve the cosmetic result.

Your new chest shape will take several months to settle as the swelling reduces and your skin tightens.

Summary

Surgery for gynaecomastia is an operation to remove excess tissue from your chest. You should consider the options carefully and have realistic expectations about the results.

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

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