

# LOST TEMPLE FITNESS

## BREAST IMPLANTS

### Quick Summary of Section

#### Breast Implant

- Implants are inserted underneath the skin or chest muscle following the mastectomy. Breast reconstruction with an implant is often done in steps with a tissue expander. In some cases, the implant can be placed in the breast during the same surgery as the mastectomy—that is, a tissue expander is not used to prepare for the implant.

#### Tissue Expanders

- A breast tissue expander is an inflatable breast implant designed to stretch the skin and muscle to make room for a future, more permanent implant.

#### Breast Implant

(Also see below)

Implants are inserted underneath the skin or chest muscle following the mastectomy. (Most mastectomies are performed using a technique called skin-sparing mastectomy, in which much of the breast skin is saved for use in reconstructing the breast.) Implants are usually placed in two parts:

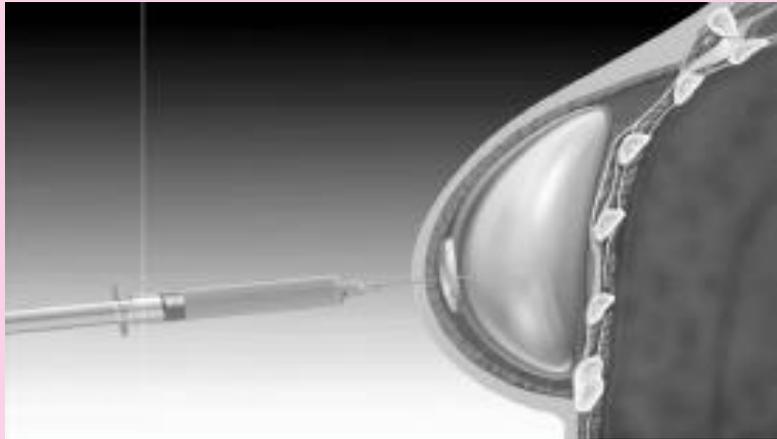
- The first step is called *tissue expansion*. This is when the plastic surgeon places a balloon expander under the chest muscle (*usually over the pectoralis minor and under the pectoralis major*). Over many weeks, saline (salt water) will be added to the expander to stretch the chest muscle and the skin on top of it by the plastic surgeon. This process makes a pocket for the implant.
- After the chest tissue has relaxed and healed enough, the expander is removed and replaced with an implant (filled with saline or silicone gel). The chest tissue is usually ready for the implant 2 to 6 months after mastectomy. This creates a new breast-like shape. Although this shape looks like a breast, you will not have the same feeling in it because nerves were cut during your mastectomy.
- In some cases, the implant can be placed in the breast during the same surgery as the mastectomy—that is, a tissue expander is not used to prepare for the implant.
- Surgeons are increasingly using material called acellular dermal matrix as a kind of scaffold or “sling” to support tissue expanders and implants.
  - Acellular dermal matrix is a kind of mesh that is made from donated human or pig skin that has been sterilized and processed to remove all cells to eliminate the risks of rejection and infection.
- Breast implants do not last a lifetime. If you choose to have an implant, chances are you will need more surgery later on to remove or replace it.
- Implants can cause problems such as breast hardness, pain, and infection. The implant may also break, move, or shift. These problems can happen soon after surgery or years later.
- Chemotherapy or radiation may be recommended to you by your surgical oncologist following your mastectomy. If you choose to have these treatments it will delay the tissue expansion process by approximately four to eight weeks.

*John Hopkins Medicine - Tissue Expanders*

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# LOST TEMPLE FITNESS

## Tissue Expander



John Hopkins Medicine (YouTube Video)

### Tissue Expanders

Tissue expansion involves expansion of the breast skin and muscle using a temporary tissue expander. A few months later, the expander is removed and the patient receives either microvascular flap reconstruction, or the insertion of a permanent breast implant. This type of breast reconstruction requires two separate operations.

#### What is a breast tissue expander?

- A breast tissue expander is an inflatable breast implant designed to stretch the skin and muscle to make room for a future, more permanent implant.
- At the same time your mastectomy is done by our breast surgical oncologist, the breast plastic and reconstructive surgeon will insert a tissue expander beneath your skin and chest muscle.
- Through a tiny valve mechanism located inside the expander, the nurse practitioner will periodically inject a salt-water solution to gradually fill the expander over several weeks or months.
- You may feel a sensation of stretching and pressure in the breast area during this procedure, but most women find it is not too uncomfortable.
- This process will usually begin three to four weeks after your mastectomy, once your drains are removed, and will continue until the size is slightly larger than your other breast.
- After the skin over the breast area has stretched enough, the expander will be removed in a second operation and either flap reconstruction or a permanent implant will be inserted.
- The nipple and the dark skin surrounding it, called the areola, are reconstructed in a subsequent procedure.

John Hopkins Medicine - Tissue Expanders

**Expanders could be in for up to a year or more if chemotherapy and radiation are done after surgery. Implants are placed 3-6 weeks after chemotherapy is complete or 6 months after radiation.**

#### Common Side Effects:

- Pain and Stiffness
- Often numb at fill site
- Difficult to lie on side
- Postural changes