

WHO GETS BREAST ENHANCEMENT ANYWAY? IS SILICONE REALLY SAFE?



employ on the canvas of obtaining natural beauty.

While the constraints of this article cannot do justice to a proper discussion of the merits and facts that surround silicone gel implants, let us briefly summarize some facts and dispel a few myths. On November 17, 2006, the U.S Food and Drug Administration approved the silicone breast implants of the two largest breast implant providers, placing these devices back on the market. Unlike their older relatives, these new “generation” of implants are “cohesive devices” with much lower failure rates and which do not leak or “deflate” in the traditional sense. This property has caused many physicians and patients alike to errantly refer to these devices as a “gummy bear implant” due to their gummy consistency when cut in half and inspected. This quality imparts a much more natural feel and appearance (fewer visible edges and ripples) to silicone breast implants when compared to saline

implants. The health concerns related to silicone implants have been widely studied in large epidemiologic comprehensive reviews spanning almost a decade (1998-2007). Each of these studies has reached the same conclusion that there is “no credible association between silicone breast implants and either well defined connective tissue disorders (i.e. Rheumatoid Arthritis, Lupus) or undefined atypical connective tissue diseases to date”. (Plast. Reconstr. Surg. 120 (Suppl. 1): 62S, 2007)

Ultimately, the choice of implant type is a deeply personal decision and there is no single correct implant for every woman. It is the combination of implant type, location (i.e. under the muscle), implant size and surgical skill that affords the best opportunity to obtain a naturally beautiful breast, restoring a lifelong paucity of breast volume or rescinding the physical breast changes that accompany the glory of motherhood. ♦

For more information about breast enhancement surgery and our implants, we invite you to call

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Dr. Jeremy Williams is a board-certified plastic surgeon in the south metro Denver area.

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The short answer to this frequently posed question is, over 300,000 women annually in the United States have undergone breast enhancement surgery. Annually collected statistics issued by The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (acquired through surveys of its members) indicate that in 2008, over 307,000 breast augmentation procedures were performed, making breast augmentation the most common cosmetic surgical procedure performed in the United States. It is common to think that you can “always tell” who has had a breast augmentation procedure, but this myth of plastic surgery is disproved on an almost daily

basis. Most patients seeking breast augmentation in our practice are seeking results that look natural, proportionate and avoid the “done” appearance that causes many women to shudder at the very thought of breast enhancement.

So what separates the patient who subtly restores volume to her breast, while maintaining a naturally aesthetic breast shape and contour from the woman you can tell has breast implants from across the restaurant or pool? In many cases, it is a combination of choosing the correct size, position and TYPE of implant. Visibility of implants and palpability (the ability to feel the implant) are two of the biggest factors

that dissuade women from considering breast augmentation. Breast implants are typically placed beneath the chest wall muscle (pectoralis major) in part to avoid visibility and palpability, but also to make mammographic imaging around the implant easier, and because less scar tissue tends to form around implants under the muscle when compared to implants placed just beneath the breast. More recently, it is the TYPE of implant that has brought breast augmentation to the next level of obtaining natural results. Specifically, it is the advent or reintroduction of silicone gel implants to the market that have provided plastic surgeons with another tool they can

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