

## Breast Implant Placements and Their Pros and Cons

*Following the scare involving the PIP breast implants, an increasing number of breast enlargement patients are demanding more information from their surgeons before going under the knife. Apart from questions involving the implants themselves and their safety, of crucial importance is also whereabouts within the breasts the implants will be situated. This is a complex issue depending upon many factors and one that confuses a large number of patients.*

Dr Allen Rezaei a leading Consultant Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon of Harley Street, London, and leader of Elite Plastic & Cosmetic Surgery Group in Dubai Healthcare City, explains the various implant placement options, clarifying both the advantages and disadvantages of each method, which often relate to a person's body type and lifestyle.

Dr Rezaei explains that “today there are essentially four locations within the breast where implants can be placed, each with its advantages and disadvantages. These are regularly referred to as sub-muscular, sub-glandular, dual plane and sub-fascia placement. The choice of which placement to use is a function of the patient's anatomy, their lifestyle, and both patient and surgeon preference.



“In sub-muscular placement the implant is placed behind the pectoral muscle. The upper 2/3 of the implant is covered by the muscle and the remaining 1/3 will be under the muscle fascia which is a sheet of connective tissue made of collagen covering the pectoral muscle. It is anatomically impossible for the whole of the implant to be fully covered by the pectoral muscle. This placement is more appropriate when the patient has little or no breast tissue to cover the implant since there is less risk of the implants being seen, providing a more natural slope, with the implants being less palpable. This placement also has the advantage of offering less obstruction during mammography. Furthermore, if a woman later undergoes a change in weight, perhaps due to pregnancy, the muscle supports the implant and so the breasts and implants are less prone to sagging.”

As to the disadvantages of this location: “sub-muscular placement can be less advisable for women of an athletic build, since their pectoral muscles can be somewhat overdeveloped, and the implant will distort when making certain types of movement, such as during swimming or getting out of a pool. It also requires a slightly longer recovery time than needed for other implant locations,” says Dr Rezaei.

Concerning the sub-glandular placement option, Dr Rezaei explains that “in sub-glandular placement the implant is placed over the pectoral muscle and under the breast tissue (glands). If the patient has sufficient breast tissue to cover the implant then this type of placement is easily achievable with less pain than in sub-muscular placement and requires a much shorter healing and recovery time. It is also helpful for patients with mildly sagging breasts who do not wish or need to undergo a simultaneous uplift procedure. Furthermore it imparts a more natural feeling to the implant when the chest muscles are used, since there is no distortion.

“Since placement sub-glandularly positions the implant closer to the breast surface,” continues Dr Rezai, “it is not recommended for patients with lesser amounts of breast tissue, since there is a greater risk of the implants being noticeable, including the highlighting of any rippling should it occur.”

Dual plane breast implant placement is sometimes also referred to as partial sub-muscular placement and is a method employing the advantages of both sub-muscular and sub-glandular positioning. According to Dr Rezai, “In dual plane placement the upper 2/3 of the implant is beneath the pectoral muscle, while the lower part of the implant is in the sub-glandular plane, i.e, over the muscle but under the glands. The surgery is somewhat more complex than that required for other types of placements, however dual plane implants offer a very realistic look and feel together with excellent muscular support and fullness. The feel of dual plane implants tends to be firm at the top of the breast and softer and more pliable at the bottom, very much like that of natural breasts, and the coverage of the pectoral muscle helps to conceal any signs of the implant shell.”

In the case of the more recent technique employing sub-fascia implant positioning, Dr Rezai explains that “In this case, the implant is placed beneath the fascia of the pectoral muscle, this approach combines several benefits of both sub-muscular and sub-glandular placement, which are the two most frequently employed locations. Sub-fascia placement works well in the case of women with adequate breast tissue but in need of added support for the implant.”

“There are several benefits to employing a sub-fascia implant placement which offer an advantage over the sub-muscular and sub-glandular approaches, in addition to the fact that it makes mammogram screening less difficult. These include a less frequent incidence of capsular contracture than with sub-glandular placement, no implant distortion when using the pectoralis muscles, and a higher degree of support for the implant. The duration of the surgery is also shorter.

“The potential downsides of sub-fascia placement relate to the fascia layer being somewhat thin, with the resulting possibility of it tearing and the implant position thus becoming sub-glandular. And also, whilst the fascia does provide support for the implant, it is insufficiently thick to provide any additional padding above the implant,” explains Dr Rezai.

“Body size, shape and amount of breast tissue determine the type of implant placement suitable for a patient. Hence meticulous examination and measurements are necessary before deciding on the type, size and placement of an implant. If chosen correctly and according to patients’ suitability, All placements should produce a Natural Look and feel” concludes Dr Rezai.

For more information concerning breast augmentation surgery, breast implants and the options available, and also other types of plastic and Reconstructive surgery performed at Elite Plastic & Cosmetic Surgery Group or to book a Consultation please call **+971 4 431 2396**.