

BREAST IMPLANT PATIENTS SURVEYS 2003 QUICK FACTS

More than 5,000 women, anonymously surveyed in two separate questionnaires, specifically addressed concerns raised by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the medical literature, plastic surgeons and their patients regarding breast implants. Plastic surgeons fully support the FDA's ongoing regulatory process.

GOALS/MOTIVATIONS¹

What are women's motivations for pursuing breast augmentation? These surveys show that women's motivations primarily relate to their sense of self. Pleasing others was one of their lowest priorities.

Top six reasons for wanting breast augmentation (checked as important or very important goal):

- 91% wanted to look better without clothes
- 84% wanted to look better in clothes
- 84% wanted to have larger breasts
- 81% wanted to feel better about themselves
- 79% wanted to feel more confident
- 74% wanted to feel less self-conscious

PATIENT SATISFACTION/QUALITY OF LIFE^{1 & 2}

Does breast augmentation meet women's goals? Does the procedure improve their outlook on life? These surveys show that women's expectations were met by the procedure.

- 94% would recommend breast augmentation to friends or family members¹
- 92% are happy about their decision to get breast implants¹
- 89% said augmentation "completely" or "mostly" met their expectations¹
- 92% reported positive effects on their overall appearance¹
- 84% said they would "very likely" (and 8% "likely") get breast implants if they could choose again based on what they know now²
- 82% reported improvement in their self-confidence¹

INFORMED CONSENT²

Do surgeons adequately inform patients about the risks of breast implants? The majority of respondents remembered being told about the risks and benefits of breast augmentation surgery.

What respondents remembered:

- 96% told what to expect after surgery
- 93% told about specific complications that might be associated with breast implants
- 92% told about the possibility of breast implant deflation or rupture
- 90% told that breast implants do not last forever
- 84% told about different types of implants

Are patients involved in the implant size decision process?

- 88% reported being actively involved in the decision about the size of their implants

COMPLIANCE WITH FOLLOW-UP AFTER SURGERY ²

Why do breast augmentation patients skip recommended follow-up visits? These surveys show that women who do not return to their surgeons overwhelmingly say they are having no implant problems.

- **92%** of women with implants remembered that their surgeons had recommended follow-up visits during the first year after augmentation
- **41%** of women with implants more than 1 year old said their surgeons had recommended routine follow-up visits. Some of them have had implants for up to 35 years.
- **80%** of women followed their surgeons' recommendations for check-up visits
- **17%** said they missed recommended follow-up appointments (3% didn't remember)
 - **24%** said they experienced no problems so they didn't think follow-up was important
 - **21%** would schedule a follow-up visit if they thought they had a problem
- **89%** would return to see their original plastic surgeon if an implant problem occurred

REOPERATION ^{1 & 3}

Although breast implants may not last forever, and complications are always a possibility in any surgery, these surveys show that the majority of revisions are done for cosmetic reasons.

- **87%** reported having no revisional surgery
- Of those **13%** who had a revision:
 - **92%** chose implant replacement, not permanent removal
 - **35%** wanted larger implants
 - **27%** wanted to improve breast shape or position

HEALTH INSURANCE ²

Can women with breast implants obtain health insurance? Survey results indicate that the vast majority of women with breast implants have insurance or can obtain coverage after they receive implants.

- **91%** have health insurance
- **13%** had applied for health insurance after receiving breast implants. Of these:
 - **91%** obtained health insurance coverage
 - **5%** (7 women) were charged a premium
 - **19%** had an exclusion of their breasts in their policies for up to 2 years (27 women)

OTHER ISSUES^{1 & 2}**How long do women consider breast augmentation before undergoing the procedure?**¹

- **77%** considered augmentation for at least a year before undergoing surgery
- **53%** thought about it for 3 or more years

Do women with implants differ from women without implants with respect to breast pain?

Many women experience breast pain associated with their menstrual cycles, nursing, or other reasons. The first survey asked if women with implants experience more breast pain than other women.

- **72%** without implants reported breast pain
- **53%** with implants reported breast pain

In the second survey, **72%** of women with implants said they either had no pain or no new pain after surgery. Of the **28%** who did have new breast pain, only **6%** said it was a severe problem.

Do women with implants experience problems nursing?¹

54% of women without implants reported problems nursing. **93%** of breast augmentation patients had their children before undergoing the procedure, so nursing was not an issue. Of the **7%** who had children and nursed them after augmentation, **50%** reported problems, essentially the same number as those without implants.

DEMOGRAPHICS^{1 & 2}

- **34 years** median age
- **75%** married or are in a long-term relationship
- **84%** have at least some college education and **45%** have at least a bachelor's degree
- **68%² to 74%¹** have an income of \$50,000 or more
- Every state, as well as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, was represented

How Data Were Gathered (References)

1. The first study surveyed 2,129 women with implants and 1,625 who were considering implants. They were asked questions related to demographics of the breast augmentation population, body image, motivations for wanting implants, quality of life, reasons for re-operation, and satisfaction with their implants. This study also gathered data on the social habits of the respondents (i.e., whether they smoked or drank alcohol, which is relevant to issues of malignancies and degenerative diseases).
2. The second study surveyed 1,350 women with implants and dealt with questions related to why women do or do not return for routine follow-up examinations after breast augmentation, the adequacy of the informed consent they received before surgery, their ability to get health insurance, and overall breast augmentation satisfaction.
3. On some questions, survey respondents could choose more than one response to questions so the percentage does not always add up to 100.

The research was funded by the Aesthetic Surgery Education and Research Foundation (ASERF). Results will be published in *Aesthetic Surgery Journal*, the peer-reviewed publication of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS). Each survey was posted on www.implantinfo.com over a period of months. Multiple survey submissions were prevented by the computer programming so only one survey per computer was accepted. After a survey was submitted, responses were sent directly from the web site to an independent statistician; neither ASAPS, ASERF, nor www.implantinfo.com had access to the data before it was analyzed. The margin of error is +/- 3% at a 95% confidence interval.