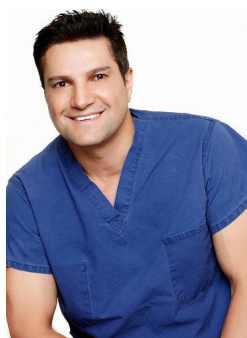


Ask Dr. Marc Malek: Which Type of Breast Implant is Best?

Written by Christina Silvestri

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From silicone to saline, Dr. Marc Malek gives AFM the 411 on everything you need to know about the different types of implants and which is right for you.



Dr. Marc Malek has been practicing for more than 12 years in the Valley of the Sun as a Board Certified Plastic Surgeon. Dr. Malek and his team at Dr. Marc Malek Plastic Surgery follows the motto, "In Every Body there is a Work of Art." As a top plastic surgeon, Dr. Malek works with each patient to achieve enhanced results that complement his or her natural features. It's no wonder he's the best doctor for breast augmentation and breast implant revision in the Valley.

Stay tuned for more of Dr. Malek's expert answers to important and frequently asked questions about breast augmentation and revision.

1. What are the differences between silicone and saline and which one is best for me?

Silicone and saline implant are both options for patients who are over the age of 22. Silicone implants tend to be softer feeling and more supple looking. This becomes a very important when you start with less natural breast tissue. Since the implant will make up the majority of your final breast volume it will be of major benefit to have the texture of a more natural feeling implant. So it is really about the ratio of real breast to implant that is in question. If most of what we feel is implant silicone is more realistic in feel and appearance. For those who already have a large breast that is soft but low in position higher projection and fullness in the upper portion of the breast will provide a more youthful appearance. The fullness that is created by a saline implant will complement the soft natural tissue that is located in the lower portion of the breast. I commonly recommend Celine implants for a mom who has a large breast that has fallen and needs a breast lift. Small implant will serve to provide cleavage and height in the upper pole of the breast. There's no additional benefit to it silicone in this particular patient type. Silicone implants do carry additional cost for material as well as require imaging in the form of an MRI as recommended by the FDA. This is due to the fact that we cannot diagnose a rupture of the silicone implant since the gel is cohesive in nature. With saline implants the salt water is absorbed through the implant pocket and a deflation will be noticed within days of occurring. Therefore no studies are required to detect a leaking saline implant. The incision length also varies between silicone and saline. Since Celine implants are filled inside the pocket and incision of 1 inch length is required for any size implant. With silicone implants the incisions will vary in length as the implant size increases. This is due to the fact that silicone implants are pre-filled and sealed at the manufacturers. Do you know if that MRIs are not covered by insurance carriers since they are related to cosmetic procedures.

2. Are silicone implants considered to be safe?

The FDA pulled silicone implants off the market for first time breast augmentation patients who are only seeking a cosmetic enhancement. They were still used for the majority of other breast surgeries which included reconstruction, patients who need a lift, and patients who are replacing their implants due to rippling and thinning of the breast. After nearly 15 years the FDA has given silicone the seal of approval and have been back on the market for nearly 5 years. They do ask that patients are over the age of 22 and that an MRI is obtained three years from the time of placement and every other year thereafter.

3. What do I need to know about the new gummy bear implants?

With the most recent reintroduction of silicone implants approximately five years ago they were considered to be cohesive or gummy bear in texture. This was the first generation gummy bear implants. If the shell of the implant is ruptured the silicone still holds its shape and does not pour out of the puncture site. They are very soft and nature when compared to saline. The second-generation gummy bear implants have recently been introduced and are much firmer and texture than the first. They have a more formal shape and multiple dimensions in regards to width, height and projection. They were really created for the reconstructive patient who has minimal breast tissue and requires the contour of the formed implant. However most of these implants tend to be a teardrop in shape and one considered in a cosmetic patient they may at times over exaggerate the lower pole of the breast leaving the upper pole rather empty. And effect they are not the best implant choice for every patient particularly a cosmetic patient who desires more height and projection in their breast. As breasts age they do become more bottom heavy hence require from us to neutralize the natural fall of the breast and rejuvenate shape. Patients with chest wall asymmetry and deficiency of volume or certain requirements in regards to cleavage and spacing between their breasts the formed implants may provide a benefit.

4. What is the difference between textured and smooth surface implants?

Smooth surface implants tend to be more commonly used and show minimal rippling however they may be associated with a higher capsular contraction rate? This relates to the implant capsule becoming tighter around the implant itself and making the breast appear tighter, asymmetric or more firm. It is thought that the texturing of the implant surface creates adherence to the empty implant pocket thereby minimizing this contraction process. Another use for texturing is when someone has had a long-standing implant that has thinned and bottomed out in the pocket. These patients can benefit from a pocket reconstruction and replacement of their smooth implant with a textured device. The texturing will allow for adherence of the new implant to the pocket and minimize relapse or bottoming out.

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For more information or to schedule a consultation, please visit www.marcmalekmd.com or call 480-551-2040.