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When Is the Best Time to Get Breast Implants: Before or After Kids?



There are many reasons why you may choose to get breast implants. Maybe you're a breast cancer survivor. Perhaps you had a preventive mastectomy to reduce your cancer risk. Or, you may be interested in breast implants simply to look and feel better. Regardless, if you're of childbearing age, you may wonder how breast augmentation surgery can impact pregnancy or breastfeeding.

We spoke to multiple plastic surgeons about the pros and cons of getting breast implants before or after having children and discussed whether implants interfere with breastfeeding. (Good news: They usually don't.) Here, find out when is the best time to get breast implants, how long they last, and what else to consider before having surgery.

The Best Time to Get Breast Implants

There is no absolute "best time" to get implants as it is a personal decision. It's important to evaluate your stage in life, and why you're interested in getting this procedure in the first place. "Breast goals change with age," says Troy Pittman, MD, a plastic surgeon in Washington, D.C. He finds that young people often get implants to look their best and build their self-esteem, whereas those who are finished having kids are usually looking to restore breast volume and treat loose skin.

Generally, however, doctors do recommend thinking about if and when you plan to have kids, mainly since weight fluctuations from pregnancy and breastfeeding can change the size and shape of your breasts.

Getting Breast Implants Before Having Children

If you want to get implants, an obvious benefit to getting them before having children is that you enjoy your enhanced breasts as soon as possible. "If you are not going to have kids for a while and you want to look and feel good, then getting implants before pregnancy may be the right decision for you," says Michael Horn, MD, a plastic surgeon in Chicago, IL.

However, it's important to know that many people who get breast implants before having kids elect to get a second surgery later to resize or reposition the implant after they've given birth. Just as your body is likely to change after giving birth, your breast size and shape may be altered, too.

"Before having children, the pro is better aesthetic results," says plastic surgeon Raja Mohan, MD, in Dallas, TX. "A con is that a revision might be needed after pregnancy."

Getting Breast Implants After Having Children

Many doctors think that to achieve the best results from breast enhancement, you may want to wait to get implants until a time when you think no major changes will happen to your body—including pregnancy and breastfeeding.

"If you are actively trying to have kids, then wait until after the pregnancy to get implants," says Dr. Horn. "The main thing is to give yourself enough time to let your natural breast achieve the final size before deciding what size implant to get."

Dr. Mohan advises that anyone in the middle of having multiple children should wait since there is a high likelihood that another surgery would be needed after pregnancy. "The con of surgery after having children is that it requires waiting," says Dr. Mohan. "The pro is this can just be one procedure that makes everything look like it did pre-pregnancy."

How Soon After Having a Baby Can I Get Breast Implants?

If you are pregnant or just had a baby, doctors recommend waiting a bit before getting breast implants.

"During pregnancy, no surgeries should be performed," Dr. Mohan says. "I also do not recommend surgery in the early postpartum period." He usually gives

patients the green light for breast surgery starting around six months after childbirth, which is enough time for pregnancy-related swelling to go down.

You may wonder whether you should get a breast lift along with implants.

Especially after having kids, many people want both. "After pregnancy, if a female desires augmentation, there is a high likelihood they may need a lift at the same time for the best aesthetic outcome," explains Dr. Mohan. However,

it's best to talk to your doctor about the best option for you. **"If you have a healthy weight gain during pregnancy, then you're less likely to have your breasts get as large, less likely to have to sag afterwards, and less likely to need a breast lift when you get implants after pregnancy," says Dr. Horn.**

This timeline could be longer if you are breastfeeding. "Patients should wait to get breast implants until at least three months after finishing breastfeeding. There should also be no signs of spontaneous milk production," adds Dr. Pittman.

The main reason to hold off until weaning your baby is that breastfeeding can affect the size and shape of your breasts. "It's best if a patient reaches a baseline or plateau in terms of the appearance of their breasts before having surgery," says Dr. Mohan.

Do Implants Interfere With Breastfeeding?

If you had a breast augmentation before getting pregnant and plan to breastfeed, there's no cause for concern. "Implants do not interfere with breastfeeding," says Dr. Horn. "Since the implant goes behind the breast tissue and not in the breast tissue, the breast ducts are still intact, allowing women to be able to breastfeed with implants."

However, there are a few things to keep in mind if you're considering augmentation and planning to breastfeed one day: the size of your implants and the placement of your incision. "Most implants should not interfere with breastfeeding, but oversized implants will put progressive pressure on the breast tissue, causing the gland to atrophy," says Dr. Pittman.

Additionally, some surgeries remove the nipple during the procedure, which can be damaging to the milk ducts. Ask your surgeon if they can go through the belly button or armpit instead, which can help prevent any damage if you're hoping to breastfeed.¹

How Long Do Implants Last?

A popular breast implant is called the "gummy bear implant." According to the surgeons interviewed for this article, this silicone implant is a natural-looking, safe choice. (Always discuss your individual risk factors with a doctor when exploring surgical options.)

"It's likely the [gummy bear implants] last much longer than others," says Dr. Pittman. **Still, it's recommended that after 10 years, you have a doctor perform a check-up on your implants. This usually involves radiologic studies like an MRI or ultrasound, Dr. Horn explains.**

If it's been many years since your breast augmentation, you may want to consider your current goals and desires, too. Since larger breasts can cause back pain or strain, some people feel the need to reverse their procedures. "Many women in their 50s and 60s want to downsize implants or have their implants removed," says Dr. Pittman.

The bottom line? Talk to your doctor well before and after breast surgery. "The best thing for patients to do is discuss all of the available options with a

board-certified plastic surgeon who has experience with cosmetic breast surgery," says Dr. Pittman.

A Word From Verywell

Why and when to have breast augmentation surgery is a personal decision. However, if you are planning to become pregnant or breastfeed in the near future, most doctors advise waiting a bit before getting implants. There is a possibility you'll need revision surgery after having children if you had an enhancement procedure earlier. A board-certified plastic surgeon should be able to help you explore all of your options so you can decide what will make you look and feel your best during parenthood and beyond.

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