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A Plastic Surgeon Shares What To Know About Mammograms If You've Had Breast Augmentation Surgery



Beginning at age 40, women are encouraged to start receiving yearly mammograms to help detect early signs of cancer, reports the American College of Radiology. Using non-invasive X-ray technology, the breasts are examined for potential indicators of breast cancer development, as well as any other abnormalities. **In an interview with Health Digest, Dr. Michael Horn, Board Certified plastic surgeon in Chicago, Illinois, discusses whether or not breast implants can interfere with mammogram test results.**

For those concerned about whether or not breast implants may place one at an increased risk for breast cancer, Dr. Horn explains that this is not the case. "No, breast implants do not cause breast cancer nor increase your risk of getting breast cancer," he states.

However, Dr. Horn notes that people who get breast implants may be more susceptible to another form of cancer. "Studies have found that women who have breast implants are at a higher risk of developing anaplastic large-cell lymphoma (ALCL). ALCL is a VERY rare form of cancer that originates in the lymphatic system. 1 out of every 50,000 patients who have breast implants will get ALCL."

Could Implants Interfere With Mammogram Readings?

Dr. Horn goes on to tell Health Digest that breast implants interfere with mammograms and make the cancer detection process more difficult. "Both silicone and saline implants make it harder for doctors to detect anything unusual. This is because implants can replace natural breast tissue, making it more difficult for doctors to detect anything potentially dangerous or irregular," he explains.

However, the placement of one's breast implants can make a difference, Dr. Horn notes. "Implants placed under the chest muscle rather than above are less likely to interfere with a mammogram," he adds.

While breast implants can potentially affect a mammogram, can the reverse be true? Is it possible for a mammogram to affect breast implants? **"It is not likely that a mammogram will cause damage to breast implants, but it is possible. On rare occasions, mammograms have ruptured breast implants," states Dr. Horn.**

Therefore, it's important to make your doctor aware if you've had breast augmentation surgery, Dr. Horn advises. "This is necessary so that the imaging center can take any necessary measures to prepare for your appointment," he explains.

This way, your doctor can ensure your health and safety during your screening. **"Although having a ruptured implant during a mammogram is highly unlikely, informing the facility that you have breast implants decreases your odds of anything happening."**

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