



AS SEEN IN COSMETIC SURGERY & BEAUTY MAGAZINE

# Big decisions

THE DECISION TO UP THE SIZE OF YOUR BUST ISN'T AN EASY ONE AND SHOULD BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, SAYS SYDNEY PLASTIC SURGEON DR ALEXANDER PHOON. LIZZY FOWLER REPORTS.

Last year breast augmentation came out on top as the most popular cosmetic procedure for US women, with just shy of 350,000 procedures performed in total. And whilst we wait for statistics to be released in Australia, it's a trend that's likely to be replicated at home.

Breast augmentation is undoubtedly one of the most popular cosmetic procedures sought by women, yet despite record numbers of surgeries performed year on year, Sydney plastic surgeon Dr Alexander Phoon says it's not a decision that should be undertaken lightly.

'It's important to realise that proceeding with a breast augmentation is a big decision for any woman,' he says. 'It's therefore crucial I take the time to listen to their concerns, their lifestyle and their priorities.'

According to Dr Phoon, a successful breast

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augmentation begins with a quality consultation between patient and surgeon. 'The consultation provides the opportunity to build trust and understanding – something that's crucial to ensuring patients are satisfied with their final results,' he says.

By understanding the patient and the wider context of why they're seeking breast augmentation, Dr Phoon is able to marry the patient's objectives with the implant shape, size, projection and placement that will ensure the best possible outcome for each patient.

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Dr Phoon believes that taking time to get to know each patient also forges trust and understanding between the surgeon and patient. 'I can't stress enough the importance of taking time during consultation to get to know each patient,' he says. 'I get upset when I hear about clinics where patients are treated more like a production line. One breast augmentation definitely does not fit all, and it's our philosophy at Silkwood Medical that a beautiful breast is one that's customised to the patient, their lifestyle, goals and body shape.'

Dr Phoon uses three-dimensional imaging technology to help patients 'see' how their results might look after surgery. 'Using 3D imaging allows the patient to realistically see what any size implant might look like on their body,' he explains.

'I have found the technology is both incredibly accurate and informative and patients enjoy the process – they get the opportunity to sit comfortably, with their clothes on, and review the effect different implant shapes and sizes will have on their appearance.'

Indeed, Dr Phoon finds many patients change their mind about what it is they want thanks to the time they spend reviewing their options with him. 'Many women come in with an idea of what they'd like, but it's only when they consult with a fully qualified plastic surgeon that they can

get an idea of what they need,' says Dr Phoon.

It's this expertise that Dr Phoon says helps women cut through the myriad of options available to them. 'There is so much choice today in terms of implant brands, shapes and sizes, it's easy for women to get confused. The consultation is therefore an opportunity to learn more about what's right for them.'

Dr Phoon also believes it's important to furnish his patients with information regarding the risks, limitations and complications associated with breast augmentation. 'Any surgery has risks, and it's important patients are informed as to the potential risks of anaesthesia,' says Dr Phoon.

'Breast augmentation also carries the risk for certain complications such as rotation, displacement and capsular contracture. Fortunately these are becoming increasingly infrequent in Australia thanks to advances in implant technology.'

Whilst many surgeons have a preferred implant – be it textured, smooth, silicone, saline or polyurethane, Dr Phoon believes in selecting the implant that is right for each patient. 'Some women may benefit from round implants, others from anatomical. Some need polyurethane implants, whereas this isn't the right choice for others,' he explains. 'In the light of the PIP implant crisis, the take home message is safety first. We offer our patients a wide range of implants, but only the most reliable, with a long, proven history of safety.'

At Silkwood Medical, all breast augmentation patients are invited to a minimum of two consultations before their procedure. 'It's vital patients take the time to attend two consultations so that any concerns can be addressed and the procedural plan fine tuned,' explains Dr Phoon. 'It's common for women to come back to the second consultation with plenty of questions that can then be answered well ahead of surgery.'

Dr Phoon also spends time with each of his patients before their procedure on the day of surgery. 'It's important patients know I'm there with them on this journey,' he says. 'I can also answer any last minute questions.'

Dr Phoon adopts a meticulous approach to surgery to minimise the extent of bruising and swelling. 'Patients should expect minimal swelling but will be able to anticipate the final results after a couple of weeks,' he says.

At Silkwood Medical, all the surgeons share the same philosophy towards patient care and excellence in plastic and cosmetic surgery. 'I personally strive to create breasts that make the patient feel feminine, confident and age appropriate,' concludes Dr Phoon. 'The most beautiful breast is one that makes the patient feel beautiful'. **csbm**