

Gynaecomastia or ‘Man Boobs’: General Information

Procedure time	3.5 hours
General/local anaesthetic	General
Number of nights in hospital	1-2 nights
Time off work	2-4 weeks
Back to normality/sports	4-6 weeks
Back to Driving	2-4 weeks
Flights	3 weeks
Showering / Bath	7days/3 weeks

Introduction and Indications

Male breast reduction is a commonly requested procedure. Male breast hypertrophy results as a common part of the pubertal growth spurt, and can be uncomfortable, embarrassing and socially disabling. Very occasionally the drive to male breast development is the result of a hormone imbalance and has an underlying cause requiring investigation. This is rare however, and the majority require a body contour operation by a plastic surgeon.

The Operation

The surgery involves a range of manoeuvres which depends upon the degree of gynaecomastia. The simplest form involves a mild excess of breast tissue without excess skin. This can be treated by liposuction, or liposuction plus limited open surgery via an infra – areolar scar. The aim is to remove the breast disc, leaving a normally projecting, symmetrical nipple position. More complicated forms of gynaecomastia involve excess breast and overlying skin, often with nipple asymmetry. In these cases bespoke surgery is planned to balance and symmetrise the two sides. As far as possible, the aim is to limit the scar to an infra - areolar position, as, unlike the female breast scars are harder to disguise on the male chest. The more the skin excess the longer the scar will need to be. Often there will be the need for one procedure to achieve the major aim, followed by a second tidy up procedure, and in these cases the gynaecomastia treatment is a process rather than a single operation. Liposuction and open surgery are often combined.

Recovery

The recovery period is not lengthy, and a return to work can be achieved in 10-14 days. Follow up with the nurse at 1 week, routine appointments with Consultant are recommended at 2 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months. Normal home activity and driving can be achieved within a week under normal circumstances. A chest girdle is worn for 3-4 weeks, to limit the swelling and help with comfort. Routine pain killers can be used as necessary. A return to sporting activity can be achieved in 4-6 weeks.

Possible Complications

The breast tissue under the nipple will be judiciously removed but there is a small risk of either residual tissue or a contour deformity for which a further revisional procedure maybe required