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Considering A Postpartum Breast Lift? Here's Everything You Need To Know

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Last month, Rihanna confessed in an Interview cover story the postpartum surgery she would go under the knife for— and it's not a tummy tuck. "If I had to pick one thing, I'm going to pick my boobs," she told the mag. "I want my titties pinned back to my shoulders, right where they used to be. I don't want implants. I just want a lift." After giving birth to her two sons, the superstar revealed how her boobs have changed as she weighed in on the popular "mommy makeover" surgery.

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, breast lifts (also known as a mastopexy) had a "notable increase" of 30% in 2022 with over 140,000 surgeries that year. "A breast lift procedure allows us to reshape the breast, specifically the nipple position, using techniques that tighten the skin and lift the breast tissue," double board-certified breast reconstructive microsurgeon Dr. Dhivya Srinivasa tells ESSENCE. "I like to use the analogy of re-seaming a pillowcase."

During pregnancy, the breasts start to increase in size at around the 6 to 8 week mark, as expecting mothers can also expect to go up one or two cup sizes. However, the breasts may continue to change in size, shape, and appearance even after birth. "Breastfeeding usually increases a woman's breast size with a rapid onset of shrinkage to follow once breastfeeding ceases," Srinivasa says. "This stretched skin that once held breast milk now covers a smaller breast, resulting in a 'sag' and 'droop' in the skin and breast."

Although Rihanna says she doesn't want a tummy tuck despite "third trimester cellulite," preferring to avoid navel reconstruction and abdominal scarring, "a 'mommy makeover' traditionally includes both breast surgery and a tummy tuck or abdominoplasty," Srinivasa says. However, board-certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon and president of the ASPS **Dr. Steven Williams** notes "the term 'mommy makeover' usually is a fluid term designed to address concerns associated with physical changes after pregnancy."

Extending past breast lifts and tummy tucks, Williams says the makeover can include changes in facial skin appearance, body and breast appearance, and even laser hair removal. Meanwhile, a mastopexy can also involve more than just a lift. "Sometimes, this procedure can be combined with other breast enhancement techniques, such as fat grafting or breast augmentation with implants," Williams says.

But before you make like Rihanna and pin your boobs back, researching the risks is also a part of the process. Although mastopexy is one of the safest procedures in plastic surgery, according to Srinivasa, you can still expect minimal scarring which may fade to a faint white line over time. "The more common complications can be mild asymmetry or prominence of the surgical scars," Williams warns. The scars, "while designed to be well camouflaged, are [still] permanent."

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