

CHANGE IS BEAUTIFUL

Your Personal Guide to Breast Reduction Surgery



north
shore
cosmetic surgery

Shown Left to Right:
Dr. Yee Cheng Low, Dr. James Romanelli, Dr. John Layliev



The Journey

INTRODUCTION	1
Are you a candidate?	2
WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR CONSULTATION	3
The Conversation	4
The Physical Exam	4
INSURANCE, PAYMENT, FINANCING	5
PROCEDURE OVERVIEW	6
Pre-Op	6
Your Procedure	7
INCISIONS/SCARS	8
ANESTHESIA AND SURGERY	9
RECOVERY/WHAT TO EXPECT	9
SUPRISING FACTS	11
LIFE AFTER BREAST REDUCTION	12
BREAST REDUCTION BEFORE & AFTER PHOTOS	13

INTRODUCTION

Few of our patients are as deeply appreciative of their results as women who get breast reduction surgery. Most consider it a life-changing procedure that provides both physical and emotional relief. Overly large breasts that cause back and shoulder pain, limit physical activity, and attract unwanted attention. Not to mention the frustration of trying to find stylish clothes that fit.

"I didn't imagine I could be so happy with the outcome. My breasts now look and feel the perfect size for my body. I want to say thank you so much to Dr. Romanelli and his staff for making me feel comfortable and confident enough to proceed with this surgery which has completely changed my life. Thank you!"

Truly one of the most satisfying aspects of being a plastic surgeon is to hear or read comments such as this. Breast reduction surgery is much more than a cosmetic procedure. If you're reading this, chances are you've encountered obstacles simply because of the size of your breasts. Even the most supportive sports bras do little to make exercising or running a comfortable experience. Perhaps you've even had people stare or make assumptions about your personality. Not to worry anymore. This guide will help you understand the journey you are contemplating and we will be right here with you every step of the way.

ARE YOU A CANDIDATE?

Breast reduction is an option for women of all ages. Each woman's situation is unique and the proper approach depends on both her physical characteristics and her symptoms. Day-to-day life can be a challenge for women with oversized, pendulous breasts. And because overly large breasts can cause medical problems, the procedure is often covered by insurance.

Younger women — and, in some cases, older adolescents — often seek breast reduction surgery for both emotional and physical reasons. Attracting unwanted attention can undermine their self-esteem at a sensitive time in their lives. Having overly large breasts may also limit their ability to participate in competitive sports, which can be an important consideration. As plastic surgeons, we help younger patients who may want to significantly reduce the size of their breasts understand that being proportional is usually the best goal. We provide the long-term vision that can be difficult for younger patients to imagine. We can generally create excellent results that won't be compromised by future pregnancies and breastfeeding.

Women whose breast size increased after having children often have breasts that sit lower than those of women with similar bodies who haven't had children. In these cases, more skin needs to be removed. Provided the patient is relatively certain that she is finished having children, breast reduction can provide life-long results.

The results can be remarkable...

In one study of 133 women, 93% reported a decrease in symptoms. In another survey of 185 women, 97% reported reduced back, shoulder and neck pain; 95% said they were happy or very happy with the results of surgery; and 98% said they would recommend it to others.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR CONSULTATION

Consulting with a plastic surgeon about breast reduction can be exciting and a bit nerve-wracking. Many women spend years thinking about having surgery to reduce the size of their breasts before making the decision to move forward with their dreams. The consultation is the first step in making that dream a reality.

Great plastic surgery results begin with the consultation. You may have heard this before, and it's true. From a patient's perspective, it's the time to have your questions answered and to decide if you feel comfortable with the plastic surgeon and his or her practice. For the surgeon, the consultation involves having an honest, open conversation with the patient and performing a physical exam.





THE CONSULTATION CONVERSATION

You may have conducted quite a bit of research online about the breast reduction procedure by the time you come in for a consultation, but it's important for us to provide a thorough overview of the surgery and the techniques that we will use. During your consultation, we'll ask about your medical history and family breast health history. If you are not up to date with recommendations for mammography, we may need you have a mammogram before the surgery. In addition, there are some key points that we will evaluate together during our discussion:

1 *Motivation*

It's important to determine that you are truly committed to wanting smaller breasts. The fact that you scheduled a consultation is a fairly good indicator, but in some cases, we find that patients are still on the fence about having the surgery. That's ok, but before we proceed with surgery, you need to be absolutely certain that smaller breasts are what you desire. Fence sitting at the time of surgery isn't a good situation for either the surgeon or the patient and can result in disappointment following the procedure.

2 *Clarity*

This is really about matching the specific surgical procedure to your aesthetic goals. By talking about your goals, we can determine whether you what you really want is a breast lift (without much or any reduction in size) or you truly desire smaller breasts. Don't worry, we will help you understand the results you can expect from both options.

3 *Acceptance*

Breast reduction surgery involves a trade-off: Your breasts will have a more proportional shape and no longer cause discomfort due to their size, but you'll have scars. Even though most scars fade quite a bit over time, no one should agree to breast reduction surgery thinking there won't be scars.

4 *Realistic Expectations*

If breast reduction is your final choice for surgery, you can expect your breasts to be smaller and more elevated, but they won't look like the results created with breast implants. We want to make sure that you understand that completely so that your post-surgical expectations are aligned with the results we can deliver.

THE PHYSICAL EXAM

Your consult will begin by meeting your surgeon briefly and talking above the above. Then, your surgeon will leave the room so that you can change into a gown. A nurse will remain in the exam room while I evaluate the tone of the breast skin (its elasticity) and the quality of the breast tissue. Measurements will be taken of the distance from the sternal notch (the little, bony hollow spot between the collar bones) to the nipples, and also from the nipple to the fold beneath the breast. These measurements help determine the surgical technique that best suits your needs.

INSURANCE, PAYMENT, FINANCING

In many cases, insurance companies will cover breast reduction surgery as a “medically necessary procedure.” Some policies require you to get a referral from your primary care doctor, or documentation from your doctor, chiropractor, or physical therapist indicating that breast reduction will help you. In addition, insurance companies generally have guidelines that base coverage on your height, weight, and the amount of tissue to be removed from your breasts.

The most frequently used reference for how much tissue needs to be removed to qualify for breast reduction as “medically necessary” is called the Schnur scale. A calculation that compares the patient’s body surface area (BSA) and the amount of tissue being removed against the Schnur scale indicates if the procedure is considered medically necessary. At consultation, I review with patients how much of a reduction is desired. From this, we estimate (in grams) the amount of tissue to be removed. We provide this information to your

insurance company, along with photographs, if requested.

From there, our staff works with your insurance company to get the surgery approved. Your weight may not play a role in the approval process, especially if the surgery is recommended by your plastic surgeon or primary care doctor. The best way to understand exactly what you need is to call a respected plastic surgeon who can help you with the process.

Our staff has extensive experience working with insurers for breast reduction procedures, which greatly benefits our patients. They’re dedicated to helping breast reduction patients get the maximum coverage possible.

If health insurance doesn’t cover all or part of the costs, private payment and financing options are available. Financing through companies that specialize in health care credit is an attractive option for qualified patients.

PROCEDURE OVERVIEW: PRE-OP THROUGH SURGERY

Once you've made the choice to get breast reduction surgery, the time leading up to the procedure can be both exciting and raise concerns. Prepping for your surgery is important to ensure you can rest and relax as much as possible during the recovery period.

Pre-Op

Prior to your surgery, you will be given detailed and thorough instructions to follow, both before and after the procedure. However, we wanted to give you some of the basics now, so you can do a little pre-planning:

- 1** **If you're a smoker, you'll need to stop at least a month prior to surgery.** Smoking increases the risk of complications both during and after surgery.
- 2** **It's a good idea to be at a healthy weight before undergoing breast reduction surgery.** In certain cases, you'll need to meet a weight-loss goal before it's safe to have the surgery.
- 3** **Stock your refrigerator with prepared meals, especially ones high in protein, along with fresh fruits and vegetables.** It helps to avoid foods and drinks that are high in sodium during the recovery.
- 4** **Make sure your wardrobe includes loose blouses that don't need to be pulled over your head.** Your arms will have a limited range of motion as you heal, so also make sure you don't have to reach for any essential items.
- 5** **Prepare your home for comfort while you recover the first few days.** Make sure it's easy to charge any electronic devices you'll want to use, have the TV remote or game console controller easily accessible, and put magazines or books on a nearby nightstand.
- 6** **Your prescriptions will be sent electronically to your pharmacy after your pre-op visit.** Be sure that they are filled prior to the surgery.

YOUR PROCEDURE

The role of surgical drains, which typically remain in place for at least 2 or 3 days after surgery, is to remove excess fluid and blood that becomes trapped just below the skin after surgery. While drains are not uncommon following breast reduction surgery, our doctors use advanced surgical techniques during surgery to minimize bleeding which greatly reduces the need for drains. There are three specific steps that will be taken during your surgery to help minimize bleeding:

- 1 After being put to sleep, your breasts are injected with a solution that includes a local anesthetic and a small amount of epinephrine (adrenaline). This is similar to the solution used during liposuction which limits bleeding.
- 2 Great care is used to carefully seal any small bleeding blood vessels during the surgery (a process called hemostasis). This careful sealing of the blood vessels is an integral part of avoiding the need for drains post-operatively, virtually eliminating the need for surgical drains in the majority of our breast reduction patients.
- 3 The breast tissue is sutured using a technique that makes drains virtually unnecessary.

Using these techniques minimizes bleeding to the extent that drains are only rarely needed. Not only do most patients appreciate not having uncomfortable drains to deal with during the initial phase of recovery, we believe that avoiding drains whenever possible reduces the risk of infection at the incision sites.



INCISIONS/SCARS

The incision pattern used for breast reduction surgery depends on the elasticity of your skin, how much breast tissue needs to be removed, and your desired results. In the majority of breast reduction procedures — up to 95% of patients — a vertical incision pattern is used (often called the “lollipop” incision). This technique involves making an incision around the areola (nipple) and then a vertical incision from the areola, down the center of the breast, to the inframammary fold (where the bottom of the breast connects to the chest wall). One of the greatest advantages of this method of breast reduction is that it produces the best-looking breasts. Short-term, the breasts may even look as full and as high as breast implants. Longer-term, as they soften and settle, they maintain great shape.

Alternatively, about 3% to 4% of patients are best served by using the “anchor” incision, which involves making a horizontal incision along the inframammary fold. For a small percentage of patients (perhaps 1%), which are those who have extremely large breasts, a “free nipple graft” breast reduction may be used. Using this technique, the nipple-areola complex (NAC) is detached from the breast and excess of breast tissue and skin is removed. I then refashion the remaining skin and breast tissue to produce the desired size and shape. The surgery is completed by grafting the nipple and areola back to the breast in a way that looks natural.

For a small percentage of patients (perhaps 1%), those who have extremely large breasts, I may perform what’s called a free nipple graft breast reduction. Using this technique, I actually detach the nipple-areola complex (NAC) from the breast and remove the great excess of breast tissue and skin. I then refashion the remaining skin and breast tissue to produce the desired size and shape. I complete the surgery by grafting the nipple and areola back to the breast in a way that looks natural.



Vertical (“lollipop”) Incision



Anchor Incision

Any time a surgeon makes an incision, there will be a scar. I discuss this with all cosmetic surgery patients during the consultation, so they understand that there is a trade-off involved. The vast majority of breast reduction patients I talk to are more than willing to have 1 or 2 scars — which typically fade over time with proper care — in exchange for relief from the physical pain and increased self-esteem.

After surgery, our patients are given instructions on how to manage the incisions as they heal. This helps to minimize scars. Generally, we begin with moisturizing creams starting just a week or so after surgery. By week 3–4 we begin scar gels and massage. These methods are usually enough to manage the incision. If you remain concerned about the appearance of your scars, there are many effective treatments that can lighten them, including lasers, injections, and topical ointments.

ANESTHESIA & SURGERY

We evaluate each patient's overall medical history and health. If needed, we ask that a patient see her primary care doctor for a pre-operative medical evaluation. However, in most cases, this is not necessary.

Breast reduction surgery is most comfortably performed under light general anesthesia. We use board-certified physician anesthesiologists to care for our patients during breast reduction surgery. The procedure generally takes about 1½ to 2 hours to complete — but for the sleeping patient, it feels like a short nap.

Recovery/What to Expect

Breast reduction surgery patients often worry more about getting through the recovery than they do about the procedure itself. And, almost as often, they are pleasantly surprised to discover that their recovery is manageable and involves less discomfort than anticipated. That's not to say your recovery after breast reduction surgery will be a breeze, but for most patients it goes smoothly if they follow the post-op instructions provided by my staff and me.

Expect to be sore and tired for the first couple of days, at least. Take plenty of time to rest and heal and don't overdo any activities, even if you feel better than expected. We recommend you avoid lifting anything heavy or reaching high above your head during the first few days. It's normal to be excited by your results after having breast reduction. But being patient during the recovery process will minimize the risk of complications and reduce scarring, ensuring that your results are just as beautiful as you'd imagined they'd be.





RECOVERY/WHAT TO EXPECT CONT.

In most cases, we use dissolvable sutures. There are few, if any, sutures to be removed. Showering can begin 48 hours after surgery.

Other issues you can expect to experience during recovery include:

Bruising

This doesn't occur for every patient, but some bruising is a normal side effect following breast reduction.

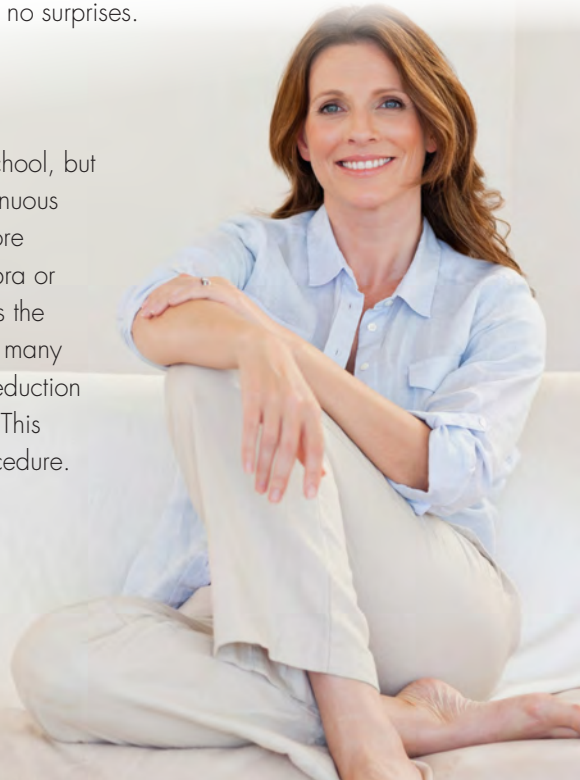
Swelling

Many of the questions asked by patients after having surgery involve the normal duration of post-surgical swelling. Even though much of the swelling resolves fairly quickly, some swelling can last for 3 to 4 months. Stay hydrated, limit your sodium intake, and do some light activity to help reduce swelling during your recovery.

Nipple Sensitivity or Numbness

Worries about losing sensation in the nipples are common. Numbness, or, even more commonly, super-sensitivity, is pretty typical in the first few weeks and months after your surgery, but normal sensation returns for the majority of patients. In the 1% of patients who undergo free nipple grafting, there will be no nipple sensation. If the procedure is recommended, it is thoroughly discussed prior to surgery — there are no surprises.

You should plan on taking about a week off from work or school, but every individual's situation is unique. If your job requires strenuous activities, or even just lifting heavy boxes, you may need more time off. You will also need to continue wearing a surgical bra or sports bra for the first few weeks. Maintaining your weight is the best thing you can do to ensure your beautiful results last for many years. Significant weight gain and loss following a breast reduction will stretch out the skin and can cause the breasts to droop. This sometimes leads to the need for a revisionary breast lift procedure. Other steps, such as following your surgeon's post-operative instructions, will enhance your results.



SURPRISING FACTS ABOUT BREAST REDUCTION

Even patients who have done their breast reduction surgery homework before scheduling a consultation are often surprised to learn about other benefits associated with the procedure, besides relief from the aches and pains caused by their oversized breasts.

Here are some facts you might not know about breast reduction:

- 1 YOU GET A BREAST LIFT TOO.**
A breast lift is actually an integral part of all breast reduction procedures. Combining a lift with the reduction improves the breast shape, elevates the nipple-areola complex, and results in perkier breasts that appear more youthful.
- 2 INVERTED NIPPLES CAN BE CORRECTED AT THE SAME TIME.**
For women with inverted nipples, breast reduction may be a good time to address these concerns.
- 3 IT MAY REDUCE YOUR RISK OF BREAST CANCER.**
Research has shown that women who undergo breast reduction surgery may have a lower risk of developing breast cancer. In all cases, the breast tissue that is removed is sent for lab analysis.
- 4 STUDIES SHOW IT IMPROVES YOUR SEX LIFE.**
A study published in *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*®, the medical journal of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), found that breast reduction patients' physical and mental well-being improved following the surgery. That included more satisfaction with their sex lives, in addition to other quality of life measurements.
- 5 YOU CAN HAVE SMALLER AREOLAS**
Enlarged areolae — the darker skin surrounding the nipples — are often associated with overly large breasts. Reducing the size of the areolae is generally part of every breast reduction, to maintain ideal proportion. A smaller areola is usually desired by breast reduction patients, and will be discussed during your consultation.
- 6 IT CAN BE A CATALYST FOR WEIGHT LOSS**
Patients considering breast reduction who are overweight typically need to lose some weight to be good candidates for the procedure. In many cases, that leads to lifestyle changes, including pursuing more strenuous activities that were previously uncomfortable to perform because of having oversized breasts.

LIFE AFTER BREAST REDUCTION



We are constantly reminded of how impactful this surgery is for the women who choose it. Relieving the heavy weight of overly large breasts, reducing the pulling of bra straps on shoulders, and reducing neck and back pain are some of the benefits our patients tell us about. But let's hear directly from them:

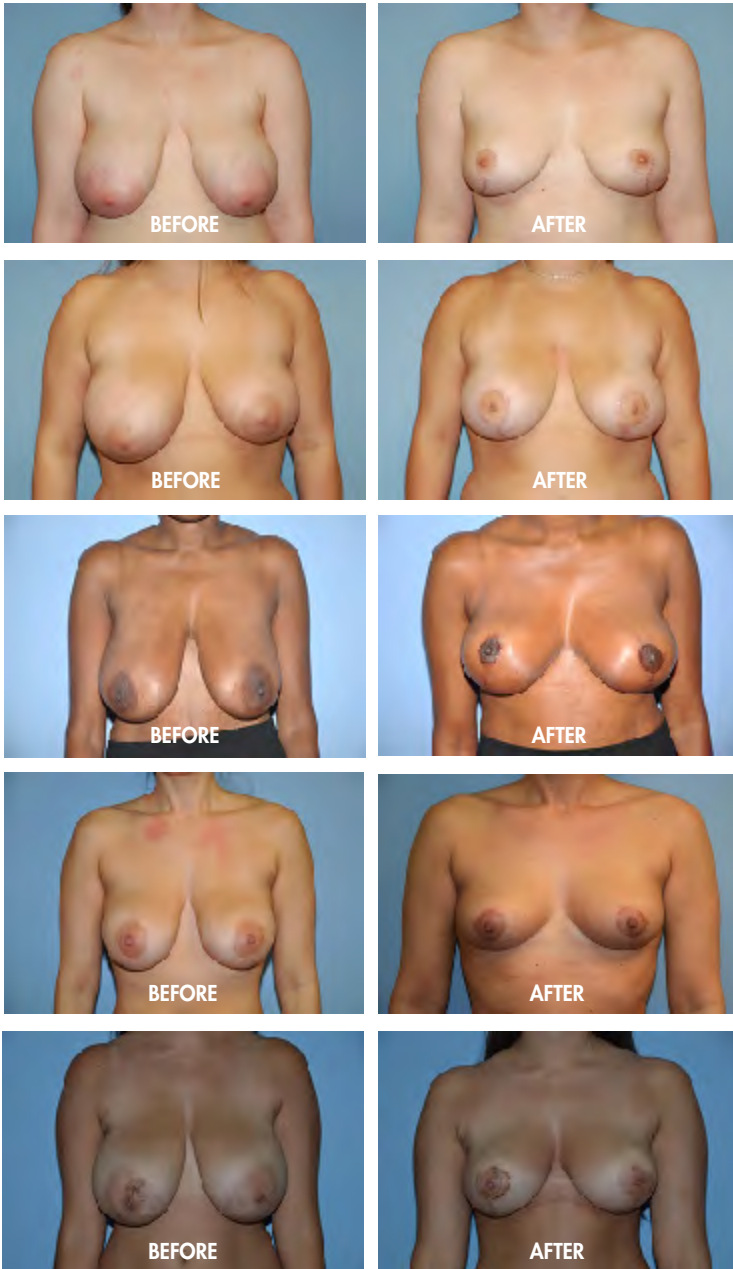
“ I just wanted to express to you how happy I am with my breast reduction and lift. WOW! I feel like I'm 16 again! This was one of the best things I have ever done for myself and it will only look better as time goes by. With that said, I want to thank you and your staff for all of it. Dr. Romanelli, you did a perfect job and I would recommend you to anyone looking to do this procedure. It is going to make my life SO much easier and better, seriously! Also, your staff was very patient with me as I called almost every day with another request or question leading up to my surgery date. Thank you again!!!”

“ Dr. Romanelli is a wonderful physician. I am so pleased with my results and with my entire experience dealing with Dr. Romanelli and his staff, from my first consultation to my series of post-op appointments. Dr. Romanelli listened attentively to all of my concerns and my desired results.”

“ Dr. Romanelli and his staff were very professional and provided excellent service from my initial breast reduction/lift consultation all the way through to my post-surgery appointments. I'm thrilled with my results!”

“ Dr. Romanelli is an excellent physician. He is very knowledgeable, honest and patient with you. I went to him for a breast reduction and couldn't be happier with the results. My experience has been life changing!!!”

BREAST REDUCTION BEFORE & AFTER PHOTOS



To view more of our cases, visit: <https://www.nscsurgery.com>



*Thank You For Considering Us To Come
Along on Your Surgical Journey*

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION, BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS, OTHER PROCEDURES WE OFFER, PATIENT REVIEWS, AND MORE.

www.nscsurgery.com



510 Broadhollow Road, Suite 100 | Melville, NY 11747
(631)424-3600