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## 7 Things You Need to Know Before You Get a Boob Reduction

Boobs are great and all, but if you happen to be a very well-endowed woman with an ample set of assets that are seriously heavy to carry around all day, they can become annoying AF. Which is why we're loving celebs like Amber Rose, Stassi Schroeder and Ariel Winter for speaking out about their own experience with this very issue and subsequent breast reductions.

Below left, Ariel Winter in 2015 at the SAG awards size 32F, and right, at the 2017 SAG awards, size 34D. At just 5' 1", Ariel said that before her breast reduction "It started to hurt so bad that I couldn't take the pain," and that afterward, she felt like a new person.

According to the [American Society of Plastic Surgeon's](#), there was even a dramatic spike in breast reduction surgeries in 2017, increasing by 11%. Well when you're dealing with neck, shoulder and back pain, self-confidence issues and the horrible task of having to go swimsuit or lingerie shopping in an entirely different section of the store, we can see why there's a spike. And even though this surgery can be costly (the [same study](#) found the average surgeon cost of a breast reduction was \$5,482, while the top doctors can pull in \$10,000+), they're well worth it to rid yourself of the aforementioned burdens.

But before you do, you should still consider the risks involved, downtime, and different types of scars, which is why we spoke to seven of the top plastic surgeons around the world to arm you with all the knowledge you need to feel solid in your decision. Whether you want to go smaller for health reasons or simply to perk up your set, there's a lot to consider before going under the knife. Allow us to break it all down.

### What Are the Risks Involved?

"There are the general risks of every operation which include bleeding, infection, hematoma (blood collection) and seroma (fluid collection). Having a breast reduction does not mean that you absolutely cannot breastfeed afterward, but it does decrease the chance to about 50/50. Also, there is the rare complication of nipple loss, meaning that you

would have to have your nipple reconstructed. This is more common in very large breasted women, but still, the chances are low.” – Dr. Melissa Doft of [Doft Plastic Surgery](#), a [Park Avenue Plastic Surgeon](#).

### **What About the Benefits?**

“There are many reasons why a woman may seek to have a breast reduction. In addition to the obvious visible decrease in size, there are many physical benefits as well. The most common reason women seek the surgery is actually not cosmetic but as a treatment to address chronic neck and back pain caused by disproportionately large breasts. In addition to the physical limitations, breasts that are too large can cause embarrassment and make some women feel self-conscious about their bodies. After the procedure, women usually experience an improvement in both physical well-being and self-esteem. Not only are the breast reduced in size, but they are lifted, and the areola is also reduced proportionately. One of the most common concerns is about scarring, however, incisions on the breast actually heal very well and fade with time. Satisfaction rate after breast reduction surgery is amongst the highest of any procedures in plastic surgery.” – [Dr. Adam H. Hamawy](#), a New Jersey Based Plastic Surgeon.

### **Should I Wait to Have the Surgery?**

“A woman I operated on a few weeks ago had nearly four pounds of breast tissue removed — imagine a four-pound dumbbell hanging around your neck? No thank you. In 20 years I have not had a single patient that regrets their decision, yet I have had many that say they wish they did the surgery sooner. Waiting longer can limit sports activity and can grossly affect your posture on top, in addition to causing pain and infection to the breast fold area. While most people don’t look forward to a surgery for fear of pain and/or complications, which are rare, the positive end results are life-changing: your clothes fit better, you stand up straighter, and you feel more confident and healthy. In many cases this surgery is also viewed as medically necessary and covered by health insurance, so keep that in mind before putting it off further.” – [Dr. Sharon Giese](#), a New York City Based Plastic Surgeon.

### **How Do the Different Incisions Differ?**

“The amount of scarring depends on the technique used. The popular ‘anchor’ incision technique makes a scar around the areola, down the breast and across the inframammary crease (under the breasts), but my preferred technique is the ‘lollipop.’ This makes a scar around the areola and down the breasts, but it’s half of the scarring of the anchor technique and requires less downtime (five to seven days) versus two to three weeks of downtime. Another thing I would add is that most patients are candidates for the limited incision lollipop technique instead of the larger incision anchor technique. However, most plastic surgeons don’t use the lollipop technique so you should ask a board-certified plastic surgeon to perform the lollipop if you desire a smaller incision.” – Norman Rowe, MD, Diplomate, American Board of Plastic Surgery of [Rowe Plastic Surgery](#).

### **What About Downtime?**

“Breast reduction procedures are most often performed as an outpatient procedure, but they should be performed at an accredited ambulatory surgical facility or a hospital by an [American Board of Plastic Surgery](#) board-certified surgeon. Within the first week, you will begin to move more comfortably and may be able to return to work in about ten days (at a non-strenuous job and possibly longer for physical jobs), and a small surgical drain is often used, which is removed in one to three days. The bruising will typically last one to two weeks, but swelling can persist for up to several weeks. I usually tell my patients to shop for a bra size after eight weeks and by three months post-surgery, patients have resumed normal activity and physical exercising. As for your scars, most surgeons use dissolving sutures which can lead to better scar cosmesis followed by at least six months of active scar care. Pressure application to scars also leads to more flattening and better results, so I have patients apply protective tape or silicone strips to their scars for six weeks, followed by scar cream with cross-linking silicone for six months (I use [BioCorneum](#)). Another common finding following breast reduction is dry and itchy skin. The blood flow to lower breast skin is temporarily altered post-surgery leaving skin pink and dehydrated, so moisture and hydration is

important to avoid skin breakdown and irritation. I find [Pure Marula Oil](#) to be very effective in keeping skin hydrated and protected during this phase since it's so soothing and calming to the skin." – Ashton Kaidi, MD, FACS of [Plastic Surgery Inc.](#)

### **Will My Insurance Cover This?**

“When patients ask if insurance will cover the procedure, the answer depends on two things: certain clinical criteria and whether or not the plastic surgeon accepts your insurance. The clinical criteria usually have to be met in order for your insurance to cover the procedure, and some insurance companies require documentation by a non-plastic surgeon physician. This documentation would need to show that you have actually experienced symptoms like neck and back pain, bra strap grooving on the shoulders and/or skin rashes, which can develop between or underneath the breasts as the result of skin rubbing against skin. Often times insurance companies will also ask for the surgeon to predict the amount of tissue to be removed, and that amount has to meet a minimum standard set by the insurance company. If your plastic surgeon accepts your insurance, then you will not have out-of-pocket costs, but many plastic surgeons are out-of-network providers at best. In those instances — if you have out-of-network benefits — your insurance company may pay for all or part of your surgery.” – David Cangelo, MD, FACS at [Cangelo Plastic Surgery](#).

### **Can You Experience a Loss of Sensation?**

“Yes, some women can lose sensation in their nipples, as well as the ability for the nipple(s) to become erect after breast reduction surgery. This happens when the nerve supply to the nipple becomes irritated or damaged during surgery. In many cases the sensation returns (partially or completely) after several weeks and months, and only in some cases, it remains a permanent loss. Interestingly though, some women experience more sensation in their nipples after breast reduction surgery than before, which in most cases it is felt to be a pleasant surprise.” – Franziska Huettner, MD, FACS of [Plastic Surgery Group of NYC](#).