

Why Women Are Getting Smaller Breast Implants

Anna, a former college track and field athlete, had always been content with her body. She was fit and strong with perky B-cup breasts. But things (meaning her boobs) went south after she had three kids, breastfeeding each one for a year. She was left with what felt like a pair of deflated balloons, according to her. “I just didn’t feel feminine,” she says. “I felt uncomfortable wearing a bathing suit—and also wearing tank tops and sports bras, which is a problem because I work out a lot and practically live in athletic wear.” She contemplated [breast augmentation](#) for a long time, but a boob job didn’t seem like the kind of thing she would do. She had never had Botox or even colored her hair, so plastic surgery felt like a big leap.

Ultimately, she decided to go for it. “To be honest, I don’t know what finally made me do it,” she says. Still, she didn’t want anyone (especially her kids) to notice she’d had breast augmentation surgery. “I didn’t want them to feel like I had to look a certain way to feel good about myself,” she says. She also worried that large [breast implants](#) would make her look bigger in clothes; she wanted a breast size that would be proportionate to her thin, trim body. So she decided to go with a large A-/small B-cup size, which both her husband and her doctor tried to talk her out of. They felt it wasn’t worth having surgery for such a subtle enhancement. “There was definitely a lot of push back,” she says, “but I didn’t want big boobs. I just wanted to look more feminine.”

Anna is not alone. According to the [American Society of Plastic Surgeons](#), small breast implants are trending. And many women are choosing a subtle, natural breast size for the same reasons as Anna. They don’t want their kids, friends, or coworkers to know they’ve had cosmetic surgery, and they want some shape and cleavage while still being able to wear tailored clothes and bikinis (without looking too top heavy). “The woman choosing a small implant is doing it for herself, to boost her own confidence and self-esteem, and not to please someone else,” says Melissa Doft, MD, a board-certified plastic surgeon in New York City. “I have several patients who want an A-cup to regain the fullness that they had pre-baby.” There are practical considerations as well: Large breasts can cause back and neck pain, and they can be a bit of a nuisance, especially when you’re working out.

But even if you’re committed to a small cup size, it can be hard to stick to your guns when your own doctor is trying to talk you into larger breasts. Doft says that the traditional teaching in the industry was to go bigger, the idea being that women who choose small implants will ultimately wish they had gone larger post-surgery. But she has never found this to be true. “Out of all of the patients in whom I’ve placed breast implants, only two have suggested that they should have gone larger. Neither one has decided to redo their surgery, though,” she says. “But I do think that my experience may be biased. Women seeking a natural look may be more likely to visit a female plastic surgeon, where women looking for more sexy, attention-attracting breast augmentation may seek the opinion of a male.” (Keep in mind that only 1 in 5 plastic surgeons are women, according to a study that appeared in the [journal](#)

[Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery—Global Open.](#)) Make sure to book multiple consultations to ensure you find a doctor who shares, and understands, your goals.

Anna has no regrets about [getting her smaller breast implants](#), which she describes as looking like a large A. “I’m so glad I did it. I can now confidently wear bathing suits and everything else—and I don’t think you can tell,” she says. “I just look more like I did before I had kids.”