



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

Gynecomastia Surgery

Gynecomastia surgery is usually a same-day procedure. This means you will come to the hospital the day of your surgery and then will go home the same day.

Before surgery

You will meet with your surgeon for a preoperative visit, to discuss the details of your upcoming surgery. There are several important steps to take before surgery:

- Do not smoke, chew, vape or use tobacco for at least 6 weeks before surgery and at least 6 weeks after surgery. Any of these can lead to severe wound healing problems and infection. **Your surgeon may request a specific test to make sure you have stopped using these substances before surgery. Surgery will be cancelled if it is found these are being used.**
- If your gynecomastia is due to substance use, you must stop using the substance to avoid recurrence of the condition.
- You will be given special chlorhexidine soap to shower with the evening before surgery and the morning of surgery. This will help lower your risk of infection.

The surgery

After you are asleep, the surgeon will make an incision at the border of the areolas (the colored area around the nipples). The areolas are lifted and extra breast tissue (and sometimes skin) is removed. In some severe cases of gynecomastia, the surgeon will also make an incision under each breast to remove the excess skin. The areolas will be put back in place and the incisions closed with stitches. The stitches will be absorbed by your body (dissolve) in 2 to 4 weeks, so they will not need to be removed. Steri-strips or surgical glue may be placed over your stitches.

Sometimes, the surgeon may also perform liposuction (a plastic surgery procedure that removes extra fat from the body) of the area. This is done through several small incisions, which will be stitched closed. The stitches will dissolve on their own. Typically you are sent home with a compression wrap over the area. Sometimes there will also be a special drain placed called a JP (Jackson Pratt) drain. This is placed to help remove fluid at the surgery site. If placed, this drain will be removed about a week after surgery during your postoperative visit.

You may be sent home with a prescription for pain medicine. Tylenol® and Ibuprofen also are used after surgery for less severe pain.

Home care after surgery

Bathing and showering: Showering is allowed on the second day after your surgery. Gently pat the incisions dry after showering; do not rub. Do not take a bath or swim for at least 3 weeks after surgery. Your provider will tell you when it is safe to soak your incisions.

Incision site care: Your incision sites may appear bruised and drain small amounts of bloody fluid for several days. The drainage might last for up to 5 to 7 days but there should be less each day.

Compression bandage: After surgery you will most likely have a compression bandage wrapped around your chest. This must be worn at all times, day and night, until you are cleared by your provider to remove it. You may only remove the bandage for showering. The compression bandage should be comfortably snug so it keeps the incision area supported. It should not be so tight that it causes you pain, discomfort or trouble breathing.

Compressive T-shirt: Once you have been cleared to remove the compression bandage, you will be asked to wear a compressive-type t-shirt for a period of time after surgery. This is to help to keep swelling down and allow you to heal properly.

Exercise and activity: Avoid strenuous physical activity. Do not lift anything greater than 10 pounds for at least 4 to 6 weeks after surgery. Your surgeon will tell you when you are allowed to lift more.

Sports, such as running, hockey, basketball, football, wrestling, snowboarding, soccer, swimming and baseball are not allowed.

Swimming in lakes, oceans and pools, and sitting in hot tubs, are not allowed for the first 3 weeks after surgery.

Return to work or school: You are allowed to return to work or school when you are feeling comfortable. If you have an active or strenuous job, you might need to take it easy at work for a few weeks. Students will have gym restrictions

for 4 to 6 weeks. They will also have restrictions against lifting greater than 10 pounds for that period.

Follow-up

You will have an appointment with your surgical team about 1 week following surgery to check on your incision sites and healing. Further follow-ups will occur in the weeks to months after the first visit.

Questions or concerns

Call the nurse line at 614-722-6449 if you have any questions, or if you have any of the following:

- Excessive bleeding or warmth at the incision
- Red streaks near the incision
- Purulent, thick yellow or green drainage
- Foul odor from the incision
- Increasing pain or tenderness not relieved by pain medicine
- Fever of 101.5 or greater
- Excessive swelling or firmness to the site
- Drain not holding suction