



# Breast Reduction for Macromastia



**NATIONWIDE  
CHILDREN'S**

*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.<sup>SM</sup>*

## **Breast Reduction for Macromastia**

Macromastia, or breast hypertrophy, is characterized by breasts that are disproportionately large compared to the rest of the body. Young women with macromastia often have problems with upper back and neck strain/pain, shoulder grooving from bra straps, trouble participating in sports or activities because of interference by the breast tissue and, sometimes, skin rashes between and beneath the breasts.

Treatment for macromastia includes weight management, physical therapy and, in some cases, surgical reduction of the breasts. Reduction mammoplasty is a procedure that reduces the size of the breasts by removing excess breast tissue, fat and skin. The areola (the pigmented skin around the nipple) may be reduced in size and repositioned as well. The surgery helps to achieve a breast size that is in proportion with a patient's body and helps to alleviate the discomfort associated with overly large breasts.

### **Before Referral for Surgery**

For patients who are excessively overweight or obese, initiating treatment options related to weight loss should be completed prior to a referral for plastic surgery. For assistance with helping patients achieve a healthy weight, please contact the Center for Healthy Weight and Nutrition at Nationwide Children's Hospital at (614) 722-4824.

In addition, if the patient is experiencing significant back/neck pain, it may be beneficial to first institute treatment with nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications and to refer her to physical therapy in order to improve posture and help relieve symptoms of neck and back strain.

If these interventions are insufficient to relieve the patient's discomfort, a referral to the Section of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Nationwide Children's can help a patient and their family decide if reduction mammoplasty is right for them.

### **Timing of Reduction Mammoplasty**

Surgery should be deferred until a young woman is close to her adult height and the breasts are mature. Typically, this is two to three years after the onset of menses, but it can vary from patient to patient. It is helpful to determine that breast growth has remained stable for at least six months prior to consideration for surgery to prevent continued growth of the breast tissue after surgical intervention. Weight fluctuations can also impact breast size. Not only do we recommend that maturity be reached, we also recommend that the patient have a stable weight for at least six months prior to referral to the Section of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Nationwide Children's.

### **About the Procedure**

Reduction mammoplasty is typically performed as an inpatient procedure under general anesthesia. Activities are limited for four to six weeks postoperatively, but patients usually return to school by the following week. Surgery of this type may or may not be covered by medical insurance, depending upon symptoms, their duration and response to conservative therapy, body-mass index (BMI) and the amount of tissue that is anticipated to be removed. Determination for insurance coverage will only be obtained after the patient has been evaluated by the surgeon and the patient is determined to be a good candidate for surgical intervention.

## What to Expect at Consultation

The patient's first visit will be with a nurse practitioner; if the practitioner determines that the patient would be a good candidate for surgical intervention, the patient will then be scheduled to see a surgeon at a separate appointment.

At the visit(s), the patient can expect:

- A medical history to be obtained including information about any previous surgical procedures, past and present medical conditions, family history of breast cancer, all medications or herbal supplements the patient is taking and any history of tobacco and drug use
- A physical examination to determine of the size and shape of the breasts, the quality of skin and placement of the nipples and the extent of breast enlargement
- Measurements and photographs taken for the medical record if patient is deemed to be a surgical candidate (these are taken during the visit with the surgeon)
- Discussion of possible risks and complications of the surgical procedure

## Additional Referrals

Depending on the patient, the nurse practitioner may make additional referrals. Please note that additional referrals may delay the patient's second consultation with the surgeon to ensure the patient is receiving the best overall care.

- Comprehensive Pain Management Clinic – For those suffering from chronic back pain, patients may be referred to the Comprehensive Pain Management Clinic. This team is comprised of physicians, psychologists, advance practice nurses, social workers, physical therapists, massage therapists and acupuncturists all working together to provide the best possible outcomes.
- Center for Healthy Weight and Nutrition – Patients who are overweight or obese and voice a concern about their weight may be referred to the Center for Healthy Weight and Nutrition. The center offers families a comprehensive approach to weight management and offers programs for both the prevention and treatment of overweight children.
- Behavioral Health – If the patient is experiencing emotional stress or has psychiatric concerns, she may be referred to Behavioral Health Services. If the patient is an established behavioral health patient, the nurse practitioner will consult with her managing physician prior to her surgical assessment to ensure all concerns are stable prior to considering surgery.

### To Make a Referral

In the Section of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Nationwide Children's, a multidisciplinary team of experts provides comprehensive care for all pediatric plastic surgical problems. To confer with a specialist, please call the Physician Direct Connect line at (614) 355-0221 or (877) 355-0221.

**To refer a patient, please call (614) 722-6299.**

---

## Referrals and Consultations

Online: [NationwideChildrens.org/Plastic-Surgery](https://www.NationwideChildrens.org/Plastic-Surgery)

Phone: (614) 722-6200 or (877) 722-6299 | Fax: (614) 722-4000

Physician Direct Connect Line for 24-hour urgent physician consultations:  
(614) 355-0221 or (877) 355-0221.

