



Anne Dancey  
PLASTIC SURGERY

## Breast Implant Selection Guide

This is designed as a guide to selecting your implant type, shape and size. I hope you find it useful but if you are uncertain or need a little more information then please do not hesitate to contact me. If you are reading this before your consultation then it is often useful to write down any questions you have and bring them with you, so that you don't forget on the day.

### Implants of excellence

I only use implants made by well respected, long standing implant manufacturers. I have never used PIP implants. All the implants I use have a lifetime warranty and come with a money back guarantee. My preferred manufacturers are Mentor, [Sebbin](#) and [Polytech](#) implants. However, I am not tied to any implant company and am happy to discuss any alternative preferences you may have.

I offer two main types of implants – Textured silicone and Polyurethane. As with most things there are advantages and disadvantages to each. The decision to choose one over the other is often a matter of patient preference. However, in patients who have had previous capsular contracture, wish a tear drop shaped implant, or smoke, my recommendation would be a polyurethane implant.

### Polyurethane

These implants have an additional polyurethane foam layer on top of a standard silicone implant. The foam is galvanized to the implant and influences the scar tissue that surrounds the implant (capsule). The capsule is a natural part of the natural healing process and serves to seal the implant off from the rest of the body. Unfortunately, in some cases, the scar tissue can gradually “squeeze” the implant. This will cause the breast to harden and potentially become painful. It is uncommon for this to occur within the first 5 years of surgery but the risk does gradually increase with time.

### Advantages

With a polyurethane implant, the textured foam layer prevents the capsule from tightening (capsular contracture). The scar tissue grows into the foamy texture and the polyurethane becomes part of the breast tissue. With silicone implants, studies have shown that the chances of capsular contracture can be as high as 20% after 10 years. With polyurethane implants, [there is a significant reduction in the risk of capsular contracture which is in the order of 1%](#) up to 15 years after an operation.

In addition, the polyurethane “fuzzy” outer coating, helps the implant stay in place by becoming integrated into the capsule. Your implant will not drop, displace or rotate with the polyurethane coating. This allows you to choose a shaped (tear drop) implant without any fears it can move. The polyurethane shell is thicker than a silicone shell and can hide any wrinkles or ripples that you can see in the implant if you have very little breast tissue.



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### Disadvantages

When these implants were first introduced in 1970s, there were concerns that the breakdown products of the polyurethane foam could be carcinogenic (cancer causing). This has been disproven and the implants have now been used all over the world for more than 50 years without concerns about cancer or any other diseases.

Polyurethane implants are not forgiving and should be placed in exactly the right place by the surgeon. Standard silicone implants will drop into the correct position over time but the fuzzy polyurethane outer coating will stick the implant like Velcro. Therefore, if they are not in the right position they will have to be adjusted as they will not settle. They tend to be slightly firmer than standard silicone implants, although they soften after approximately 1 year.

With these abilities, these implants are more expensive than standard silicone implants.

### Silicone implants

These are the standard implants used by most surgeons. Silicone has been used for many years in a variety of medical devices. It is present in heart valves, indwelling catheters and baby bottles. Due to its smooth and soft structure, silicone implants slide easily on chest wall and feel more natural. The implant surface is textured to reduce the risk of hardened edges and capsular contractures.

### Advantages

Silicone implants are simple to insert and will gradually settle into a natural position after surgery. They feel like breast tissue and have a soft, doughy consistency. They are slightly cheaper than polyurethane implants but come with the same lifetime and money back guarantee.

### Disadvantages

Capsular contracture is the most significant problem associated with these implants and occurs in up to 20% of patients after 10 years (although that means that 80% patients will not have any problems). Severe capsular contractures may need another operation to remove the scar tissue and replace the implant.

### Implant Shape

Implants can be **round** or **anatomical**. Round implants are like a hemi-sphere which gives fullness in the upper pole of the breast. Anatomical implants are teardrop or pear-shaped and carry most of the volume at the base of the breast with a flatter upper pole.

Recent studies have shown that most of the time surgeons and patients cannot tell whether round



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or anatomical implants have been used.

Teardrop shaped implants are said to give a more natural contour to the breast, particularly in patients with little breast tissue. However, they are more expensive and they have the potential to rotate, unless they are polyurethane coated. They are also firmer and the upper edge may be visible or palpable.

For most patients, a round implant is more suitable. These implants come in different profiles or projections (meaning how large they are from a side on view) and this dictates how much fullness they give in the upper part of the breast. Some patients need to have fullness restored in the upper part of the breast if the breast volume has descended and others prefer more fullness to give a more pronounced cleavage. If a round implant rotates in its pocket there will be no visible change to the breast.

### Implant Size

This is obviously a very important factor in selecting the correct implant for you. I will go through the range of sizes that I think are suitable depending on your ideal cup size and the dimensions of your breast. Using the [Crisalix 3D breast scanner](#) we can upload a 3D model of your chest to see and compare different implant volumes and shapes. You can then confirm this using the rice test at home and the implant sizing kit in the clinic. Whilst I can guide you, the ultimate choice is up to you.



I hope you find this information useful. If you have any questions or require a little more information then please do not hesitate to [contact me](#).



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Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon