

## **Breast Lift/ Mastopexy**

The natural history of the female breast is descent of the nipple over time. Over the years, factors such as pregnancy, nursing, and gravity take their toll on a woman's breasts. As the skin loses its elasticity, the breasts often lose their shape and begin to sag. A Breast lift, or mastopexy, is a surgical procedure that temporarily raises and reshapes sagging breasts. (No surgery can permanently delay the effects of gravity and aging) Mastopexy can and often also reduces the size of the areola, the darker skin surrounding the nipple.

The two components of the appealing female breast are the size of the breast in relationship to the patient's body size and the position of the nipple. A mastopexy can reposition the patient's nipple to a more youthful position. To restore the volume of the breast one should consider a Breast Augmentation at the time of the mastopexy. If your breasts have lost volume - for example, after pregnancy - breast implants inserted in conjunction with mastopexy can increase both their firmness and their size. Consult your plastic surgeon on which procedures are best for you. Remember that major mastopexy combined with breast augmentation can have a higher revision rate.

Many women seek mastopexy because pregnancy and nursing have left them with stretched skin and less firmness in their breasts. However, if you're planning to have more children, it may be a very good idea to postpone your breast lift. While there are no special risks that affect future pregnancies, pregnancy and possible weight gain are likely to stretch your breasts again and offset the results of the procedure.

While a mastopexy is a lifting of the breast with a repositioning of the nipple superiorly it is not a Breast Reduction. Usually, with a mastopexy the patient could expect a decrease in cup size while with a breast reduction there can be a decrease in 2 or more cup sizes following the procedure.

A mastopexy can be a minor or major procedure depending upon the amount of lift required to produce a more youthful breast. A Mastopexy can take one and a half to three and a half hours. Techniques vary, but the most common procedure involves an anchor-shaped incision. When the excess skin has been removed, the nipple and areola are moved to the higher/ lifted position. The skin surrounding the areola is then brought down and together to reshape the breast. Patients with relatively small breasts and minimal sagging, may be candidates for modified procedures requiring less extensive incisions. One such procedure is the Crescent Mastopexy in which a smaller crescent moon incision is made around the superior areola, and the nipple is moved upward. If you're having an implant inserted along with your breast lift, it will be placed in a pocket directly under the breast tissue, or deeper, under the muscle of the chest wall.

Recovery after a mastopexy is usually very rapid. However, if you have an augmentation at the time of the mastopexy care should be taken to allow for a complete healing and recovery which can take several weeks.