Lipomodelling in Breast Surgery

Breast Care Nurses

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Introduction

Lipomodelling (fat grafting) is a procedure used to improve the contour of the reconstructed breast or augment (increase the size of) the breasts.

It involves taking fat from elsewhere in the body and injecting it into the required area.

The result can give a soft, natural appearance and feel, and is minimally invasive. It may sometimes be called lipofilling or fat transfer.

How is it done?

Fat is taken from your own body, often the abdomen, thighs, buttocks or hips, in a procedure called liposuction (a term also applied to cosmetic fat reduction). It is done through small incisions into the skin.

The removed fat is then concentrated and grafted with great care in tiny amounts into the area to be treated. This procedure is performed under a general anaesthetic in one or more sessions depending on the amount of fat graft needed.

Are there any side-effects or complications?

Most patients have minimal side effects or complications, but you should be as fit as possible before the surgery, not actively dieting and stop smoking.

- **Swelling at the donor site**, as with any liposuction – this can take a while to settle and this is why a compression garment is advisable such as total support pants or cycling shorts. Bruising and skin discoloration can occur but this is usually temporary. Before the surgery you should not be taking aspirin or anti-inflammatory medication.

- **Sensation** – the treated areas can remain numb for several weeks.

- Some of the fat grafted may disappear over time and the procedure may need to be repeated. Contour irregularities may occur but these should settle in time.

Post-operative Recovery

The surgery is done in theatre usually as a day-case or an overnight stay.

- You should rest for 24 hours and then increase your activity.

- Normal, non strenuous activity can be resumed after 2-3 days.

- You will have a few small dissolvable stitches to close the incisions.

- It is advisable to wear a snug girdle or long-legged total support pants /cycle shorts over the donor area for a few weeks. This will help with the swelling and bruising and also with the contouring of the donor area.
• Ensure your bra does not put pressure on the lipomodelling area.

• You will be asked to attend the Nurse Led Drop in Clinic one week post lipomodelling for a wound review.

• These clinics are held in the Macmillan Cancer Resource Centre on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9.30am and 11am.

• Pain – although not an especially painful procedure, you may take your usual painkillers as required (do not exceed recommended dose).

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