



Patient Information Guide

Areola Reduction

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Topics to be discussed with you Surgeon - Things you need to know

1. CAUSES OF AN ENLARGED AREOLA

The areola is the pigmented area surrounding the nipple and has an average diameter of 4-5cm. Enlarged areolas are usually congenital, and can be related to your individual breast development. Occasionally they may be related to certain conditions of under-development of the breast such as the hypoplastic breast.

2. SURGICAL CORRECTION

This is regularly performed as a simple, safe outpatient procedure lasting 60minutes. It is usually performed under local anaesthetic, or if you prefer a short general anaesthetic.

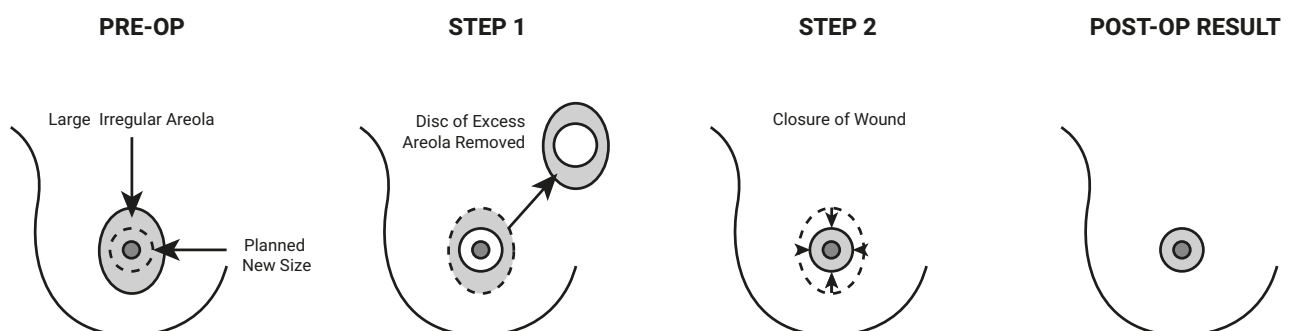
The surgical technique involves firstly using a local anaesthetic to numb the area completely, this will then last for approximately 2-4hours after the operation.

The new size of the areolar (usually around 4-5cm in diameter) is decided on using a specialized nipple marker and then the edge of this circular disc of pigmentation is then incised. The excess outer area of pigmentation beyond this is then removed.

The wound is then closed with a combination of absorbable and permanent sutures. The “purse string” permanent suture is placed deeply and is used to maintain the size of the areolar. See Figure 1 below.

The nipple areolar complex is then covered with a simple protective dressing for 1 week. A further follow up will be arranged for 3-4months time.

Figure 1. A simple diagrammatic representation of the operation.



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Continued

Potential risks of the operation:

- 1) **Reactions to the local anaesthetic** – we use the same anaesthetic the dentists use and reactions are very rare. It is often not the anaesthetic but the adrenaline within it that causes the reactions such as a fast heart rate and easily managed by simple supportive measures.
- 2) **Bruising/bleeding** – most patients experience some level of bruising that will clear over 2-3weeks. Occasionally the dressing may have a bit of blood on it in the first 2-3days, this may require an early dressing change, nothing more is needed
- 3) **Infection** – is extremely rare, and if it occurs a course of local antibiotic cream and oral antibiotics may be needed.
- 4) **Pain** – it is expected to feel some discomfort in the first week post surgery, but this is usually mild and is managed by regular simple analgesia.
- 5) **Scabbing** – this occurs on the edge of the wound, it is best to leave the scabs to fall off naturally. If stuck to the dressing the easiest way to remove this is to soak the dressing off in the shower.
- 6) **Sensation** – the area may be either hypersensitive or numb, over the course of the first few weeks and this usually recovers fully.
- 7) **Recurrence** –very rarely the permanent suture works itself loose. If this occurs the areola may stretch, how big this gets is variable.

3. POST OP INSTRUCTIONS

Keep the dressing dry till the first dressing change, which is usually at 7days. Take regular analgesia as req'd.

It is advised that you undertake all of the household duties prior to your admission to hospital, as you will not be able to perform these for a while afterwards. This includes vacuuming, dusting, and clothes washing, ironing and shopping i.e. no pushing, pulling, lifting

DO NOT take any Aspirin or medication containing Aspirin for at least 7 days prior to surgery. (Aspirin may be re commenced after 48hrs post op.) If you take Aspirin or any other form of blood thinning medication for a medical condition, please discuss with your surgeon.

I prefer if you do not take Arnica during the period prior to surgery. If you do want to take it please start it at least 24hours post surgery.

Food and drink

NO FOOD IS ALLOWED 6HOURS PRIOR TO ANY SURGERY, THIS INCLUDES ANY SWEET/CHEWING GUM. YOU MAY HAVE SMALL SIPS OF CLEAR FLUID (STILL WATER/BLACK TEA/BLACK COFFEE) UP TO 2 HOURS PRIOR TO ADMISSION TO HOSPITAL

It is advisable to sleep on your back for the first 2-3 weeks.

After the initial dressing is removed protect the breast in a padded bra for a further 2-3 weeks
Avoid strenuous activity/heavy lifting/straining for the first 4weeks.

Note: if you have any concerns after the operation has been performed please contact the hospital/clinic where you had the procedure.