

FROM THE PHYSICIAN'S DESK:

Making the Decision for **Breast Reduction**

with Ryan Diederich, M.D., plastic surgeon



One of the most rewarding procedures I perform is reduction mammoplasty, or breast reduction.

For many women, a short procedure can overcome a lifetime of concern. Here are some answers to questions I am frequently asked.

AM I A GOOD CANDIDATE?

Breast reduction is indicated for women with symptomatic macromastia (excessively large breasts), including discomfort in the neck, shoulders and back. Shoulder grooving from bra straps and the associated discomfort are also common complaints, as are rashes that won't resolve with treatment. A good candidate for breast reduction is a healthy woman of any age who has symptoms interfering with daily life.

WILL INSURANCE COVER THE PROCEDURE?

In the past, insurance approval has varied widely. Thankfully, there are now improved criteria that most insurance plans follow. Most insurance companies now determine eligibility based on a patient's specific symptoms and a specific calculation that can be determined at the time of consultation.

ARE ALL BREAST REDUCTIONS COMPLETED THE SAME WAY?

Options for breast reduction continue to expand as we make improvements in techniques. These patterns can address variable methods for long-term breast support and efforts to limit scars. It is critical that a breast reduction is tailored for an individual's needs to provide the best aesthetic, functional and long-lasting results.

WHAT IS RECOVERY LIKE?

The procedure takes approximately two to three hours and patients go home the same day. The discomfort is typically less than most women expect. Most women are off work one to two weeks and feeling nearly 100 percent by six weeks. Final results will be seen after three months. Often patterns that have the worst appearance initially are designed to "settle" into place and provide some of the best long-term results.

Dr. Ryan Diederich is a board certified plastic surgeon serving the St. Louis metro region. He is a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, on the Council on Membership and Advocacy for the Illinois State Medical Society and President of the Madison County Medical Society.

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