

“I am a 21-year-old woman, and I exercise regularly. How safe is injecting fat into the breast region to increase its size?” **Ritika, Mumbai**

Fat has been used to enhance breasts for some time now, but it is still considered investigational for the most part and somewhat dangerous. With the increase in the number of cases of breast cancer, we should not introduce factors that may compromise its diagnosis. Introduction of fat is known to cause calcifications over a period of time, which are considered suspect. We therefore do not advocate its use, as long term research on it is lacking. Reports, if any, are anecdotal, and therefore not scientific. Most breast cancer surgeons of repute agree with this.

DR MOHAN THOMAS, MD (USA), FACS (USA), leading cosmetic surgeon, visiting scholar Mt Sinai Hospital (New York) and consultant, Breach Candy Hospital, The Cosmetic Surgery Institute, Mumbai, answers your queries related to cosmetic surgery. Send in your queries to femina@www.co.in

I have read about thread lifts. How good are they? How long do the effects last?

Kirti, Chennai

Thread lift is a relatively new tool in facial rejuvenation. It is a minimally invasive procedure and results are instantaneous. Thread lifts last for one to two years and have produced good results in Europeans and East Asians. However, it has been seen to be not as effective for Indians, who have thicker skin. Many people who have undergone this procedure are feeling disillusioned with it. Thread lift can work magic, but only in select cases. It certainly isn't the panacea for all facial rejuvenation.

I am a 40-year-old mother. I am 5'3" and weigh about 55 kg. I'm not fat, but I'm very conscious about my tummy. I've been exercising, but haven't seen results. I also have stretch marks on my stomach, butt and breast. I would like a solution to this.

Esha, Pune

Exercising regularly will go a long way in maintaining your weight. Your problem area is your abdomen, which has loose skin and muscles due to pregnancy. If you want a flat abdomen, I recommend surgery to tighten the area. This is usually a hospital-based procedure, only occasionally done as a day care. The healing takes a week and long-term

results are permanent. There is no treatment that can make the stretch marks disappear, as they are formed due to a break in the collagen. But there are ways to make them less visible. The best non-surgical treatment for stretch marks is good waterproof makeup.

I had liposuction done in Delhi last year. I am 29 years old and single. I have put on 10 kg after that. What, according to you, could be the reason, and what can I do about it?

Sunita, Delhi

Liposuction is a body-contouring procedure, in which loss is measured in inches, not lbs or kgs. It goes without saying that there will be some weight loss, which would vary from person to person, depending on several factors, such as dietary compliance and exercise. Additionally, I suggest you consult an endocrinologist.

I am 30 years old, single and in good health. I recently underwent breast implant surgery and am very unhappy with it. It looks artificial and appears to be sagging even more. Please help.

Latika, via email

There is more to breast surgery than just placing an implant. It is important that the patient and the doctor have a detailed discussion about all the benefits, risks and options, and also one's expectation. Besides, an evaluation of the breast, to see if any additional procedure is required, is critical prior to the final treatment plan. To make a proper assessment, I need to know when the implant was done and if the shape has changed since. I suggest you give it some time and ask your surgeon to re-evaluate your case. For further comments, please send me your pre-surgery and post-surgery pictures. •

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