IS BREAST REDUCTION RIGHT FOR YOU?
Before you decide if this procedure is right for you, it’s important to understand what you can expect from breast reduction surgery, as well as the benefits that are available from this surgical procedure.

What is a breast reduction?

Breast reduction surgery, technically known as reduction mammoplasty, is a surgical procedure that removes skin, glandular tissue, and fat from the breasts with the goal of making the breasts lighter, smaller, and firmer. Sometimes, breast reduction surgery can be used to reduce the size of the areola, or the darker skin area around the nipple.
What are the benefits of breast reduction surgery?

The ultimate goal of breast reduction surgery is to alter the size of the breasts so that they are proportionate to the rest of your body. As a result, you will feel more comfortable and confident about your shape, and be able to avoid some of the common health problems that are associated with large breasts.

Breast reduction surgery can alleviate the physical discomforts associated with large breasts, including neck and back pain, poor posture, breathing problems, and skin rashes underneath the breasts. Smaller breasts can also relieve pain, scars or grooves on the shoulders from bra straps. Women who undergo breast reduction surgery are often able to participate in a broader range of vigorous activities or sports, and find that their physical movements are less limited when they are no longer restrained by the size and weight of their breasts.
If you have a hard time finding supportive bras with a comfortable fit, or finding clothes that fit right and flatter your body, breast reduction surgery will expand your wardrobe options and may even help you save money on bras and clothing.

In addition to the physical benefits, breast reduction surgery offers many mental and emotional benefits as well. Many women find that they are more comfortable and confident after breast reduction surgery, and they are happier about their overall appearance. Many women with larger breasts, especially younger girls, often feel extremely self-conscious about their appearance, and these insecurities can often be overcome when the breast size is corrected.

Additionally, large breasts often draw attention, including uncomfortable comments and stares in a public setting. If you are tired of being the object of unwanted attention due to your breast size, then breast reduction surgery may help you feel more comfortable in public settings.
Who is a candidate for breast reduction surgery?

When deciding on any type of elective surgery, it is important to consider your goals for the surgery and also your overall physical and mental health to determine if the procedure is right for you.

One important factor to consider is whether the breasts are fully developed. It is usually best to wait until full development has been reached before having any type of surgical procedure on the breasts. However, surgery may be performed at a younger age in some situations, if the patient is experiencing severe physical discomfort.

It is important that the patient is mature enough to understand the surgery as well as what to expect from the surgery and the recovery period.
It is best to delay breast reduction surgery until after you are finished having kids if you plan to breastfeed your babies.

You may also want to consider if you are planning to lose weight in the near future. Weight loss can have a direct impact on breast size, and many women find that they can minimize the amount of tissue that needs to be removed if they focus on weight loss before undergoing breast reduction surgery. Additionally, a breast reduction can be combined with other surgical methods which lift the breast and remove excess skin after you have lost significant weight.
How do I prepare for the procedure?

If you think that you are a good candidate for breast reduction surgery, the first step is to schedule a consultation with a plastic surgeon to learn more about the procedure. The doctor will evaluate your breasts and make recommendations about the best approach for improving your appearance and shape.

During your consultation, your surgeon will ask you questions about your medical history to determine if there are any medical concerns that might put you at risk during the surgery. Your doctor will ask about your family medical history, as well as any medical conditions that might have affected your breasts, such as lump removal or breast cancer.

Your doctor will also talk with you about your goals for surgery, to make sure that they can be met and that you have realistic expectations. During this consultation, it is likely that your doctor will take pictures of your breasts and determine the amount of breast tissue that will need to be removed in order to create the ideal breast size for your body.
You will also receive information about how to prepare for the surgery and achieve the best outcome from the procedure. For example, if you smoke, it is best to quit smoking before your surgery to help with the healing and recovery process. Smoking can suppress the immune system and lead to potential complications from the surgery.

Before any major surgery, it is advisable to achieve the best health possible to support your overall health and wellness. Make sure that you are fully transparent about your medical history, so the doctor can determine the best course of treatment and any other considerations that need to be made to protect your health.

As your surgery date draws near, it is a good idea to make a few preparations at home to ensure a smooth recovery. For example, have plenty of ice on hand, as well as clean washcloths, towels, and gauze. Make sure that your cabinets and refrigerator are well stocked so that you won’t have to go to the store.
During breast reduction surgery, you will be put under general anesthesia so that you will sleep through the surgical procedure. Typically, breast reduction surgery is performed in an outpatient facility or a hospital. Most of the time, breast reduction surgery is performed on an outpatient basis, meaning you are able to return home on the same day.

The surgery usually takes between two to five hours, depending on the exact surgical approach. One of the most common methods is to cut around the outside edges of the nipple area, and then continue the incision down the breasts to make a keyhole shape. Once the incision is made, the extra tissue and skin will be removed, the nipples will be repositioned, and stitches will be used to close the incision.
Your breasts will be wrapped in a special gauze to assist with the healing process. Depending on your surgery, you might need to wear a surgical bra for a while after the surgery is complete.

Following surgery, you will not able to operate a motor vehicle, so it is important that you are accompanied by a friend or family member who can drive you home. Additionally, this person should stay with you for at least 24 hours after the surgery, to help with anything that is needed and to watch for potential signs of complications from the anesthesia. It is not a good idea to care for yourself without the support of someone else, because you will still be under the influence of the anesthesia and you may need assistance with basic tasks.
Are there complications or risks of breast reduction surgery?

As with any major surgery, breast reduction surgery carries certain risks. But, these complications are not likely if you follow the recommended recovery steps from your surgeon. The most common risk is infection at the incision sites. You should watch for signs of infection such as fever, discharge from the incisions, or loosening of the stitches.

If you have any concerns about the surgery, the best thing to do is talk with your doctor so that your questions can be answered before the procedure. An experienced doctor will take the time necessary to talk with you about everything you can expect from the surgery, so that you will feel well informed and prepared.
What can I expect after surgery?

Your surgeon will provide information and instructions regarding wound care, physical activity, and resting time following your procedure. It is important to follow these instructions carefully in order to avoid complications from the surgery.

While your breasts are healing after the surgery, they will be very tender, but your doctor can provide you with medication to prevent infection and decrease the pain. During this healing time, it is best to wear loose-fitting blouses and t-shirts, in order to avoid putting undue pressure on your chest.
Most people need a minimum of a week of recovery time after the surgery is complete, in order to allow plenty of time for healing. Some people might need as much as two weeks of recovery time, so make sure that your schedule is somewhat flexible in order to accommodate your needs.

You will need to schedule follow-up appointments with your surgeon to check on the incisions and the healing progress. The surgeon will let you know when your stitches and bandages can be removed.

During the recovery time, it is best to avoid physical activity for about a month. Physical activities will need to be limited until the doctor gives you approval to return to normal activities. Returning to normal activities too quickly might increase your pain and hinder the healing process, and could potentially cause the incision site to become irritated.
Taking the first steps towards breast reduction surgery

If you think that breast reduction surgery is right for you, your first step is to schedule a consultation with a qualified surgeon. During your initial consultation, you will have the opportunity to discuss your individual concerns and goals for the surgery. Scheduling a consultation doesn’t mean that you will obligated to have the surgery, and you will never be pressured into a surgical procedure that isn’t right or isn’t something that you want. Monarch Plastic Surgery will answer all of your questions and help you make the right decision to achieve your goals. Contact us to learn more about your options for breast reduction.