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BREAST AUGMENTATION

Small breasts are not a disease. The only pathology that is normally related is psychological, perhaps producing an inferiority complex. So we are dealing with an aesthetic problem, that can be corrected by silicone implants.

Implants have a more than 40-year history. Today, the preferred implant is the Type III, with a thick capsule to avoid microscopic leaks of silicone gel. The gel itself is denser than in older types. These implants have met European standards since 1999.

We believe the best surgical approach to be through the axilla (armpit), which permits us to form a space deep to the pectoral muscles by means of a blunt dissector, with no sharp dissection and an almost bloodless field. The long-term result of such retromuscular implants is much more reliable and natural than implants just under the skin. This experience has been gained from breast reconstructions after mastectomy. The constant contraction of the pectoral muscles massages the implant, avoiding almost entirely the formation of a fibrous capsule around it. The breast has a much more natural look, and is softer and warmer. The axillary approach avoids cutting sensory nerves to the nipple, meaning that the breast's sensitivity remains unchanged. The axillary scar is very small (3 to 4 cm), and hidden in a natural skin fold amongst the normal hairs. It is away from the breast itself, and therefore not immediately connected with it in the mind of someone who might be tempted to ask indiscreet questions.

The only inconvenience with retromuscular implants is a flattening of the breast when the pectoral muscles are strongly contracted, as in tennis or push-ups. If particularly sporting women complain of this, a highly selective sectioning of a few of the nerve fibres to the lowest part of the muscles can be performed to reduce the contraction without noticeable weakening.

Breast augmentation is performed under general anaesthesia, as a day patient.

In 2002 the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health in Bern - "Swissmedic" - published a pamphlet on the "ABC" of breast implants, that should be read by all existing breast implant patients, and those who wish to undergo the operation, in order to gain forehand knowledge permitting

properly informed consent. We participated in the production of this text as consultants for various Swiss, European and international standards committees (OFSP, ASN, CEN, ISO, EQUAM).

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes that form a stylized representation of the name G.-F. Maillard.

Dr G.-F.Maillard, Privat-Dozent