OIHANE GARCÍA
CIRUGÍA PLÁSTICA Y DE GÉNERO

TOP SURGERY – GENERAL INFORMATION

Chest Masculinisation Surgery (Top Surgery)

For many trans men, the chest is one of the main sources of distress. Having breasts can cause daily discomfort, anxiety in public spaces and difficulty feeling at ease in their gender. For this reason, **chest masculinisation surgery**, also known as top surgery, is one of the most important procedures within the gender-affirming process and, for many people, the only surgery they wish to undergo.

The procedure involves removing most of the breast tissue to create a more **masculine chest contour**. Beyond the physical change, most people who undergo this surgery report a **significant improvement in their emotional wellbeing**, self-esteem and relationship with their own body. It can also make everyday activities easier, such as getting dressed, going to the beach or the gym, changing in changing rooms or simply feeling more comfortable in public.

Studies show that, following surgery, most people experience a significant **reduction in gender dysphoria**, as well as an overall improvement in quality of life, both socially and professionally. For this reason, we do not consider this surgery to be cosmetic, but rather a medical procedure that **improves the health and wellbeing** of trans men.

Chest masculinisation surgery helps many trans people **live with greater comfort, confidence and wellbeing, both physically and emotionally**. Having clear information, professional support and time to make your decision is essential. If you are considering this surgery, speaking with a specialist team can help you address any questions you may have and decide what is best for you.

Types of Chest Masculinisation Surgery

Mastectomy for chest masculinisation is performed to create a **flatter, more masculine chest**, and there are several techniques depending on breast size, skin elasticity and the person's preferences. Each technique has its own advantages and considerations, and a specialist surgeon will help you decide which is most appropriate for you.

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1. Double Incision with Free Nipple Graft

- This is the most commonly used technique for people with larger breasts or less elastic skin.
- Two horizontal incisions are made across the chest to remove the breast tissue.
- The nipples are removed and repositioned in a more masculine position using a graft.
- Advantages: allows the chest to be completely reshaped and the nipples to be repositioned aesthetically.
- Considerations: leaves visible scars beneath the pectoral muscles and around the nipples, but most patients feel that the result is worthwhile.

2. Periareolar Mastectomy

- Suitable for people with small to medium-sized breasts and firm skin.
- An incision is made around the areola to remove the breast tissue.
- The nipples are not completely detached, which helps to preserve sensation.
- Advantages: smaller and less visible scars.
- Considerations: may not be sufficient for larger breasts or when there is excess skin. The contour may be less defined if there is ptosis (sagging breast tissue).

3. Keyhole Mastectomy

- Similar to the periareolar technique, but with a small additional incision to allow more tissue to be removed.
- Suitable for small breasts with firm skin.
- Advantages: minimal scarring and good preservation of nipple sensation.
- Considerations: limited to people with little breast volume and not suitable for larger breasts.

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General Considerations

- The choice of technique depends on **breast size, skin elasticity, nipple shape and personal expectations.**
- All techniques aim to achieve a **natural-looking masculine chest** contour while minimising complications.
- Changes in nipple sensation are possible, particularly with techniques in which the nipples are repositioned as grafts.
- Your surgeon and healthcare team will explain the risks, benefits and post-operative care so that you can make an informed decision.

In summary, there is no "one-size-fits-all" technique: every person is different, and surgery is tailored to your individual needs and body. The aim is to achieve **a chest that makes you feel comfortable, confident and aligned with your identity**, while having a team that supports you throughout the entire process.

Surgical Procedure

- Duration: 1:30 to 2 hours.
- Anaesthetic: General anaesthetic is used to ensure your comfort throughout the procedure.
- Hospital stay: A short hospital stay is usually required, allowing you to return home the following day.
- Post-operative recovery: Following surgery, it is common to experience swelling, bruising and tenderness in the chest. In many cases, drains will need to remain in place for the first 24–72 hours. During the first week, you will need to take antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medication and rest your arms, although you will be able to walk. For the first month, you will wear a compression garment day and night to help the skin adapt properly to its new position.

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Importance of the Medical Team

International guidelines recommend that this surgery is performed by surgeons with specific training in gender-affirming surgery, working as part of a multidisciplinary team and providing clear information about the benefits, risks and post-operative care.

Remember

If you have any questions or need assistance, the medical and nursing team is here to support you and answer any questions you may have. Your recovery is a process that we go through together, so that you can feel comfortable and confident in your body again.

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Kind regards,



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