

CAPSULAR CONTRACTURE

Background

Capsular contracture is a condition associated with the insertion breast implants. It is used to describe the abnormal thickening of the capsule that occurs following breast implant insertion. In the majority of patients the capsule is nice and soft and patients will not get any problems. However, in a proportion of patients (around 15%) abnormal capsule formation may occur – so-called capsular contracture. Patients may get pain, hardening and/or a change in the shape of the breast. More often than not, capsular contracture needs to be treated with surgery.

The treatment

Mr Banwell believes the best treatment for capsular contracture formation is to remove all the scar tissue (capsule) surrounding the implant (a capsulectomy). However, in some patients just releasing the capsule (a capsulotomy) may be more appropriate. This is usually combined with the insertion of new implants (implant exchange).

The benefits

This operation will improve the shape of your breast and create a softer feel once more.

Duration of Surgery

The surgery can take anything up to 3 hours depending on the complexity and severity of the problem. Drains are usually inserted on each side, and these will normally stay in for 1-2 days

Complications of Surgery

Unfortunately complications can occur following any surgery and patients need to be fully aware of this. Mr Banwell does his utmost to minimise the complication rate and likes to practise in a safe manner. The commonest complications are scarring, bleeding, haematoma formation and the need to return to theatre, prolonged drainage, infection, removal of implants, numbness, alteration in nipple sensation, asymmetry in the healing and the final result, palpability, visibility, rippling, clots in the legs and lungs and of course further capsular contracture.

After Surgery

The recovery is often similar to your original operation although this will vary from patient to patient. Mr Banwell recommends you commence wearing a sports bra immediately after your drains are removed and you should continue wearing this day and night for 8 weeks. After the surgery the wound will be dressed with brown micropore tape which is waterproof. You will be able to shower the day after leaving hospital after which you can pat the tape dry with a towel and then use a hair-dryer on a warm setting to ensure the tape is completely dry. You will normally be able to return to work after 2 weeks depending upon how you feel.

Recovery

In the first week following surgery you should take things very easy. The following week you will find you can do much more and may be ready to return to work. You should avoid lifting and carrying for 2 weeks following surgery and strenuous exercise/physical activity should be avoided for 6 weeks. Many patients find gentle cardiovascular exercises are fine after a few weeks. You can drive when you feel safe to perform an emergency stop otherwise your insurance company may invalidate your insurance.

Success and satisfaction

The operation has a high success rate. However, once an abnormal thickened capsule (capsular contracture) has occurred recurrence is possible.

Important Notice

Mr Banwell strongly advises you stop smoking prior to surgery as this can affect the outcome of surgery and increase complication rates. Nutritional supplements, anticoagulant medication and blood thinners (eg. aspirin and brufen) all increase the risk of bleeding and should be stopped prior to surgery unless otherwise instructed.

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NOTES & QUESTIONS

AT A GLANCE

SURGERY TIME

2 hours

HOSPITAL STAY

1 - 2 Nights

ANAESTHETIC ASSESSMENT

No

PRE ADMISSION TESTS

Possibly

SLEEPING POSITION

Sleeping on back recommended for 4 weeks.

REASONABLY MOBILE

1 day

WASHING

Shower after 1 day. Bath after 2 weeks.

DRIVING

3 weeks

EXERCISE INCLUDING GYM

8 weeks

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Restricted activity after 4 weeks

FULL RECOVERY

8 weeks

TIME OFF WORK

2 weeks

BRAS & GARMENTS

Sports bra worn for 8 weeks. Wired bra after 2 months.