

	Breast implants	Back LD flaps	Tummy TRAM and MS-TRAM flaps	Tummy SIEA or DIEP flaps	Buttock SGAP or IGAP flaps	Thigh TMG or PAP flaps
Will I need an implant?	Yes	Implants may be placed behind the flap.	No	No	No	Implants occasionally used.
Average length of surgery	1 ½ to 2 ½ hours (two surgeons) 3 to 4 hours (one surgeon)	3 to 5 hours	About 4 to 6 hours	4 to 6 hours	4 to 6 hours	4 to 6 hours
Time in hospital	1 to 3 days	3 to 5 days	3 to 7 days	4 to 8 days	4 to 8 days	4 to 8 days
Recovery time	4 to 6 weeks	6 to 8 weeks	6 to 12 weeks	6 to 12 weeks	6 to 12 weeks	6 to 12 weeks
Scars	On breasts only.	Scars on breasts and scars on the back.	Scars on breasts and from hip to hip, near the bikini line.	Scars on breasts and from hip to hip, near the bikini line.	Scars on breasts and scar on upper buttocks (SGAP) or in the creases under lower buttocks (IGAP).	Scars on breasts and in the crease of the upper, inner thighs.
Effects on muscles	Very little or no change in muscle strength.	May cause slight shoulder weakness. LD muscles in breasts may twitch.	Risk of weakness in tummy muscles. Mesh is used to strengthen them.	Small risk of weakness in tummy muscles.	No change in muscle strength.	No change in muscle strength.
Things to consider	May give a less natural shape and feel than your own tissue. You may need further surgery to replace an implant if certain problems develop.	May not be suitable if you need to regularly use your arms above shoulder height. May affect ability to do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sports such as climbing • racquet sports or swimming at a professional level. 	May not be suitable if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are very slim or overweight • have scars on your tummy from previous surgery • have health problems such as diabetes • smoke. 	May not be suitable if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are very slim or overweight • have scars on your tummy from previous surgery • have health problems such as diabetes • smoke. 	May not be suitable if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have health problems such as diabetes • are very overweight • smoke. 	Small risk of lymphoedema (long-term swelling) in lower leg. <p>May not be suitable if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have health problems such as diabetes • are very overweight • smoke.