

# Making informed choice about cosmetic surgery

**W**e are subjected to images of 'celebrities' in many forms of media that it becomes easy to judge them based on how they look. Not all, but some of these celebs may have undergone some form of cosmetic surgery and are encouraged to reel off the numerous procedures they have been through!

With this in mind, I spoke with two women from Norfolk about their decision to go under the knife and what sort of negative judgements or positive reinforcement they experienced as a result.

Danielle, 23 from Norwich had a breast augmentation with Miss Rozina Ali at the Colney-based Spire Norwich Hospital. Danielle explains "Before the operation, I was a 'C' cup so the reasons for having a breast enlargement were not due to feeling flat chested."

Danielle is a trained dancer and felt that having a larger chest may help her career. "I think people will make a judgement about what I am like based on my reasons for surgery, I am aware of that. However, my job involves being confident on stage, and increasing my bust by two bra sizes has achieved this and I do get offered more work as a result. The interesting thing is that my breasts still look entirely natural with barely visible scars, so no-one has passed any judgement because Miss Ali has ensured they look and feel as natural as possible. So, I think the additional work clearly comes from me feeling more confident."

Miss Ali, Consultant Plastic Surgeon at Spire Norwich Hospital explains: "My job is not to interrogate the motivations for surgery but to provide realistic and expert medical advice. This allows me to either support their decision, or advise them of alternative options to achieve a similar outcome, or to advise against surgery. In Danielle's case, she originally toyed with the idea of going larger than a 'DD' cup, however taking her job into account I explained that going larger would hinder her ability to perform. Also, typically, very large implants are associated with a bigger risk of complications."

Miss Ali continues: "It's important to build an honest and professional rapport with my patients, so if I recognise that surgery is not the solution or feel the patient is asking for something which is

**HELEN CULLING** of Spire Norwich Hospital talks to Consultant Plastic Surgeon Miss Rozina Ali and two Norfolk patients about how they reached the decision to undergo cosmetic breast surgery.



neither realistic nor achievable, I have no hesitation in saying so. Cosmetic surgery unfortunately divides opinions and those who undergo surgery may occasionally be judged as being selfish or vain – in most cases, the reasons can be much more profound and are due to self-esteem and social pressures."

Danielle concludes: "I met Miss Ali and knew straight away she was the right surgeon for me. She had integrity and a high level of experience in this surgery and was right about the implant size I should have. I am now a '32DD' and I am thrilled with the results. The aftercare I received from her and the staff at Spire Norwich Hospital has far exceeded my expectations."

Joanne, 36 from Norwich, had a consultation with Miss Ali to discuss a breast enlargement, but the reasons behind it were quite different. She explains "I breast-fed all three of my children. When I stopped feeding my youngest, I was shocked to see how vastly different my breasts had become as a result."

Miss Ali explains: "Hormones, pregnancy, gravity and ageing are going to get you in the end! They are the main culprits for loss of breast volume and 'perkiness'. During and post pregnancy women experience hormonal and physical changes, all of which take their toll on breast tissue, breastfeeding may contribute to loss of volume but is not always the main offender."

Joanne first met with Miss Ali last summer and recalls "I was very self-conscious about my chest and felt very strongly that surgery was my choice and I couldn't let anyone else's judgements influence my decision. My partner understood as he knew how little confidence I had as a result of my deflated flat chest."

"I had two consultations with Miss Ali. I found her warm, knowledgeable and honest. She could see that I had little volume in my breasts and discussed the pros and cons of undergoing surgery and the merits of different implant sizes. Although the risk of complications was clearly explained, I came away from the consultation feeling both confident and completely informed."

Miss Ali describes the operation. "A breast augmentation (enlargement) typically takes about 1.5 hours under general anaesthetic and involves inserting a solid silicone implant underneath your natural breast tissue or under the muscle of the breast. I always attempt to minimise scarring, so the sutures are under the skin, absorbable and usually hidden away from sight – under the crease of the breast for example. The patient will stay in hospital overnight or if fit and well may be suitable for a daycase procedure. Recovery depends on their lifestyle and their surgery, but most are back to normal activities within days and more strenuous activities within weeks."

Joanne concludes: "I love my new breasts. They have given me so much more confidence and magnificently enhance my body shape. I receive nothing but compliments now. My advice to anyone thinking about having a breast enlargement would be to make sure they feel completely at ease with the surgeon they choose and be sure to take all the time they need to reach a decision."



■ Rozina Ali, Consultant Plastic Surgeon at Spire Norwich Hospital.

■ For further information or to make a private appointment please contact one of the team on 01603 255 614. Further details regarding Consultant Plastic Surgeon Miss Rozina Ali can be found at [www.spirenorwich.com](http://www.spirenorwich.com) or [RozinaAli.com](http://RozinaAli.com)

■ All surgery carries an element of risk and the content of this page is provided for general information only. It should not be treated as a substitute for the professional medical advice of your doctor or other healthcare professional.

## Ask the specialist

**HERSH DEO**, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at Spire Norwich



Hospital, talks about meniscus tears.

**I am an active 50-year-old man but, recently, my knee has been 'locking' and I am unable to straighten it. It is agony, but after a few days it's fine again! Is this old age catching up with me, or something serious?**

This is a complaint I see in my practice frequently and is typically due to a meniscal tear, which in basic terms is the tear of the cartilage tissue in the knee joint.

The joint is made up of three bones: the femur (thigh bone), the tibia (shin bone), and the patella (knee cap). The surfaces of these bones within the joint are covered with a layer of cartilage. This important surface allows the bones to smoothly glide against each other without causing damage to the bone. The meniscus sits between the cartilage surfaces of the bone to distribute weight and to improve the stability of the joint. We sometimes think of it like a shock absorber.

Symptoms of a meniscal tear often include swelling of the knee, knee pain, locking and 'popping' of the knee and restricted movement due to the discomfort it causes.

As you suggest your symptoms may be due to degeneration (wear and tear) of the meniscal cartilage, however if you have sustained smaller injuries to the cartilage over time, for example through sports such as football and rugby, this too could be a contributing factor.

Meniscal cartilage does not heal very well once it is torn. This is mainly because it does not have a good blood supply. The outer edge of each meniscus has some blood vessels, but the area in the centre has no direct blood supply. This means that although some small outer tears may heal in time, larger tears, or a tear in the middle, tend not to heal and will continue to cause you problems.

An MRI scan will ascertain whether you have a meniscal tear. If you have, it is easy to rectify. An arthroscopy (keyhole surgery) and meniscal debridement (trimming of the cartilage) should rectify the problem fairly quickly.

I would encourage you to see your GP who may refer you for an MRI scan to determine if this is indeed the problem.

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■ For further information on knee conditions arrange an appointment with your family doctor, or call 01603 255614 to make a private appointment with Mr Hersh Deo.

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■ Keep questions brief and send them to Ask the Specialist, EDP Weekend magazine, Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich, NR1 1RE. Questions will be handled with discretion and you will remain anonymous. Specialists cannot enter into direct correspondence.



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