

how **YOU** thrive

Male Breast Reduction

Enlarged breasts in males, also known as gynecomastia, often causes extreme social and emotional trauma. Men with the condition are usually highly embarrassed by their physical appearance and develop coping strategies to protect their self-esteem. They may avoid any situation that would bare their chest such as swimming and exercise; they may fear intimacy; and they often try to hide their appearance by wearing loose clothing or developing a hunched over posture.

Surprisingly, this condition is fairly common in men of all ages, affecting about 40% to 60% of males at some point in their life. Enlarged male breasts during puberty will often go away after a period of time. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, gynecomastia accounts for more than 65 percent of all male breast disorders. It is important to note that while enlargement usually develops on both sides of the chest, if it is one-sided, firm, and hard, see a doctor immediately to rule out male breast cancer.

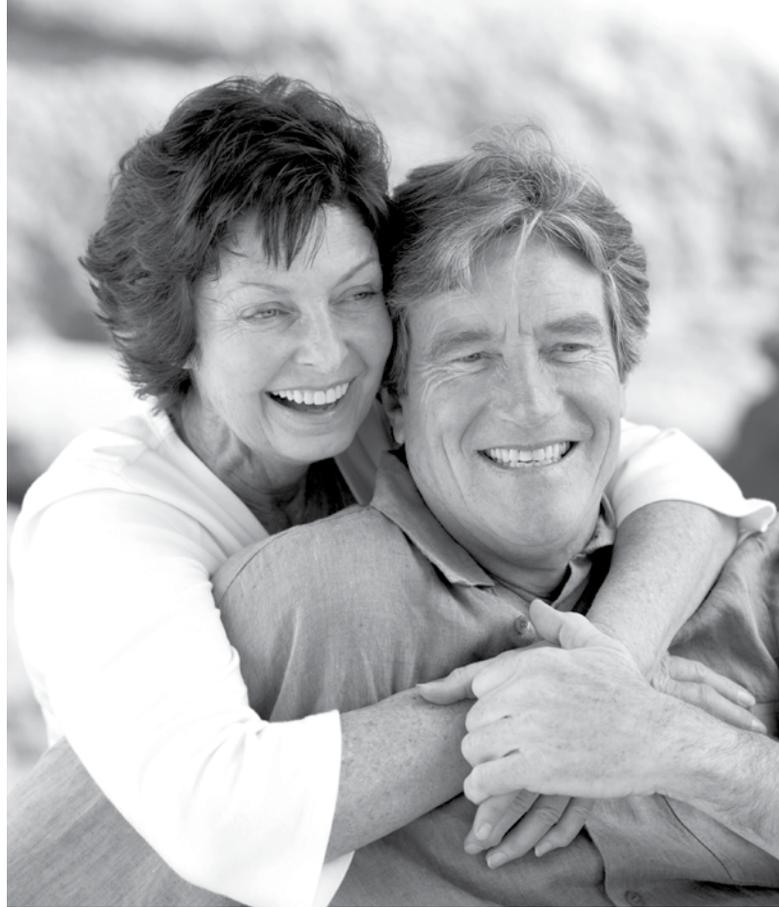
The cause of gynecomastia is not known, but it is generally agreed that it has something to do with an imbalance of sex hormones. Androgens are hormones that create male characteristics, such as hair growth, muscle size, and a deep voice. Estrogens are hormones that create female characteristics. All

men have both androgens and estrogens. Changes in the levels of these hormones, or in how the body uses or responds to these hormones may

cause enlarged breasts in men. Certain prescription medications as well as steroids and the use of street drugs may also be contributing factors. Being overweight, which causes the body to develop more fatty tissue, may also aggravate the condition

The only treatment for gynecomastia is breast reduction surgery. Men who are considering surgery as an option should first consult with a board certified plastic surgeon to see if they're a candidate for the procedure. The physician will conduct a thorough medical evaluation to confirm that the patient is in good health, is not obese, is not taking medications or drugs that could be the cause, and rule out any other possible underlying medical conditions.

The surgery itself is fairly common and straight forward. There are few side effects and complications are rare. The type of procedure used by your surgeon will depend on the degree of breast enlargement. In most cases, the glandular tissue is surgically removed, followed



by liposuction to remove excess fat. Recovery time varies from person to person and depends upon the extent of the surgery. Patients often return home the same day, return to sedentary work in less than a week, and resume normal activities, including exercise, in 6 weeks.

Male breast reduction can greatly improve the appearance of the chest. Most men who have had the surgery experience a boost in self confidence and are liberated from years of hiding their chest.

For more information regarding male breast reduction or other procedures contact Dr. Laura Randolph; 309-664-6222, Dr. Chad Tattini; 309-664-1007 or Dr. Paige Holt; 309-664-4444 at Twin City Plastic Surgery or www.twincityplasticsurgery.com. Their office is located at 2502 E. Empire, Suite C in Bloomington.

Submitted by Laura Randolph, M.D.