

	Breast implants	Back LD flaps	Tummy SIEA or DIEP flaps	Tummy TRAM and MS-TRAM 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 rarely used.
Average length of surgery	1½ to 2½ hours with 2 surgeons 4 hours with 1 surgeon	3 to 6 hours	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	3 to 7 days	3 to 7 days	3 to 7 days
Recovery time	4 to 6 weeks	6 to 8 weeks	6 to 12 weeks	4 to 12 weeks	6 to 12 weeks	6 to 12 weeks
Scars	Scars on breasts only.	Scars on breasts and back.	Scars on breasts and from hip to hip, near the bikini line and around the belly button.	Scars on breasts and from hip to hip, near the bikini line and around the belly button.	Scars on breasts and scar on upper buttocks (SGAP) or in the creases under lower buttocks (IGAP).	Scars on breasts and 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 often used to strengthen them.	Low risk of weakness in tummy muscles. Mesh may be used to strengthen and support the muscle.	No change in muscle strength. Mesh may be used to strengthen and support the muscle.	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 problems develop. You may have higher risk of complications if you smoke, are overweight or have health problems such as diabetes.	May not be suitable if you need to regularly use your arms above shoulder height. May affect your ability to do sports such as climbing, high-impact racket sports, or swimming.	May not be suitable if you are very slim or have scars on your tummy from previous surgery. You may have higher risk of complications if you smoke, are very overweight or have health problems such as diabetes.	May not be suitable if you are very slim or have scars on your tummy from previous surgery. You may have higher risk of complications if you smoke, are very overweight or have health problems such as diabetes.	You may have higher risk of complications if you smoke, are very overweight or have health problems such as diabetes. There is a small risk of nerve damage causing pain or numbness at the back of the leg.	You may have higher risk of complications if you smoke, are very overweight or have health problems such as diabetes. There is a small risk of lymphoedema (long-term swelling) in lower leg.
If you are having radiotherapy treatment after surgery	Wound-healing problems may delay start time of radiotherapy. You may have a higher risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> capsular contracture the implant needing to be removed a poor cosmetic appearance wound-healing problems. 	Wound-healing problems may delay start time of radiotherapy. You may have a higher risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fat necrosis. 	Wound-healing problems may delay start time of radiotherapy. You may have a higher risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fat necrosis poor blood supply to the flap, causing partial flap failure. 	Wound-healing problems may delay start time of radiotherapy. You may have a higher risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fat necrosis poor blood supply to the flap, causing partial flap failure. 	Wound-healing problems may delay start time of radiotherapy. You may have a higher risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fat necrosis poor blood supply to the flap, causing partial flap failure. 	Wound-healing problems may delay start time of radiotherapy. You may have a higher risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fat necrosis poor blood supply to the flap, causing partial flap failure.