

## **“Super-furry” Brazilian breast implants dramatically reduce the risk of capsular contracture**

Dr Daniel Fleming performs more breast implant operations than any other doctor in Australia and also has the most experience of any doctor in Australia using Silimed’s polyurethane foam covered silicone gel implants. He believes any woman considering breast implant surgery should be informed of the option these “super-furry” Brazilian implants. Here’s why...

Everyone considering breast implant surgery soon discovers that the commonest complication is capsular contracture. This is where the membrane, which grows around all implants and which normally you can’t see or feel, behaves like “shrink-wrap”, compressing the implant causing it to feel firm or hard, often distorting its shape.

Unfortunately this complication is by far the biggest cause of dissatisfaction and the need for further surgery. Evidence submitted to the regulatory authority in the USA, the FDA, by the two biggest implant companies showed that by 3 years between 8 and 13% of patients had developed capsular contracture.

At last there are implants available in Australia which can reduce this problem dramatically. They are manufactured in Brazil by Silimed and they have recently received approval from the Australian Government’s regulatory body, the Therapeutic Goods Administration. This means Australian doctors can now offer them to all their patients. Many years of use overseas has shown that covering silicone gel implants with a polyurethane foam surface reduces the risk of capsular contracture to between 1 and 2%. The foam covering feels like suede or fur – hence the name “super-furry Brazilians” - easier to remember than “polyurethane foam! This type of implant is not new. They were first used as long ago as 1969. It is also worth noting that polyurethane has been implanted safely in humans for decades for other uses such as pacemakers and blood vessel grafts. Like all silicone gel implants, the foam covered implants have been improved over the years and now contain the same cohesive gel as other implants. Whenever a new implant is introduced it must be rigorously assessed over a long period of time to ensure it is safe. Since 1970 there have been more than 60 papers published in learned journals around the world about the use of these implants. The papers have confirmed their safety and reduced rate of capsular contracture. Here are three examples of the conclusions of these papers:

Dr Neal Handel, an Assistant Clinical Professor of Plastic Surgery in Los Angeles reviewed all of the breast implant patients from his practice covering the period 1981-2004. 345 smooth implants, 618 textured and 568 polyurethane foam covered implants were used.

**“Based on analysis of our data, we conclude that the contracture rate after all types of breast surgery is dramatically lower with polyurethane foam covered implants than with smooth or textured implants”**

**“There is nothing...to suggest that polyurethane foam, or its in vivo breakdown products, pose a threat to the health or safety of patients. Polyurethane implants have measurable advantages over smooth and mechanically textured gel-filled prostheses and do not appear to be associated with an increased risk of complications or morbidity.”** (Handel, N. Long-term safety and efficacy of polyurethane foam-covered breast implants. Aesthetic Surgery Journal Vol.26 2006)

Guillermo Vasquez, a plastic surgeon from Buenos Aires in Argentina reported his experience using these implants in 407 patients over a ten year period. He concluded

**“...this implant reduces capsular contracture to under 1%”**

**“We believe that the above mentioned percentage and the low incidence of other complications make the use of these implants one of the best options for augmentation”.** (Vasquez, G. A ten year experience using polyurethane-covered breast implants. Aesthetic Plastic Surgery Vol.23 1999).

Dr Roderick Hester, Dr John Tebbetts and Dr Patrick Maxwell from Georgia, Dallas and Nashville respectively, reviewed the literature on and their experience with polyurethane covered breast implants. The senior author concluded

**“During the span of this author’s practice, he has never been able to match the number and quality of superior results exemplified by these patients when using other devices.”** (Hester T.R., Tebbetts, J. Maxwell, G.P. The polyurethane-covered mammary prosthesis: Facts and fiction (II). Clinics in Plastic Surgery Vol.28 2001.

At the practice of Dr Daniel Fleming and Dr David Topchian, Brazilian implants have been used in selected patients with TGA approval for the last 4 years. Their experience has confirmed the international experience with these implants – very low rates of capsular contracture combined with excellent softness and appearance. Now that these implants have been approved for unrestricted use by the TGA, Dr Fleming and Dr Topchian advise

**“The Brazilian implants offer definite advantages for most patients. We recommend any patient considering breast implant surgery should ask their doctor about his or her experience using this type of implant so they can make an informed choice”.**