



Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons

MEDIA RELEASE

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Women with breast implants urged not to be alarmed by inaccurate reports on cancer link

Women who are concerned about their breast implants following reports of a study linking infection caused by implants to a rare cancer, should discuss their concerns with their doctor.

“However, we urge women not to be unduly alarmed as this is an exceptionally rare cancer affecting only 170 women worldwide to date. To put it in perspective we are talking about a potential risk to approximately one in one million women with breast implants,” says President of the Australian society of Plastic Surgeons, Dr Tony Kane.

Author of the study published in the journal *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*, Associate Professor Anand Deva emphasised the risk of contracting the rare cancer was “extremely low.”

He also corrected inaccurate reports that suggested there was a 30 percent chance of women with implants post-mastectomy contracting the cancer.

“That is completely incorrect. There is a 30% chance of contractures (not contracting cancer as reported) which is essentially some hardening of the tissue around the implant,” said Associate Professor Deva.

“While it is important that women aren’t alarmed by this study, it is essential that patients are followed up annually for a clinical examination and they are educated about how to identify any abnormalities such as a lump around the implant,” said Associate Professor Deva.

Associate Professor Deva has recommended a 14 point safety plan around breast implant saying all surgeons need to be conscious of the risk of infection when the implants go into the breast.

“This highlights the importance of implant procedures being conducted by properly-trained plastic surgeons in appropriately accredited facilities,” said Associate Professor Deva.

Dr Tony Kane said the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons welcomes any new research that helps shed new light on ways to improve patient safety. The Society has taken a leading international role with the establishment of a Breast Device Registry to ensure any patterns of concern around breast implants or devices are detected, and acted on early to avoid any repeat of problems in the past.

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Founded in 1970, the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons Inc (ASPS) is the peak body for Specialist Plastic Surgeons (both reconstructive and cosmetic). Its mission is to provide the highest quality plastic surgery care to all Australians.