



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# What is gynaecomastia?

Breastcare

Patient information

## **What is gynaecomastia?**

This leaflet offers information on gynaecomastia, following your recent appointment at the Park Centre. We hope you find this resource helpful in understanding the condition better.

Gynecomastia is the benign enlargement of male breast tissue which may be present on one or both sides. It can also cause breast tenderness.

## **Why do I have gynaecomastia?**

Gynaecomastia is usually caused by changes in your levels of the hormones oestrogen and testosterone. This is very common during puberty, or as men reach older age.

Other causes of gynaecomastia may include obesity, prescription and illegal drugs, excessive alcohol consumption, as well as certain medical conditions that increase the risk of its development.

## **How can I find out if I have gynecomastia?**

At your clinic appointment, one of the medical team will ask you about your medical history, including the medications that you are taking. You will also have a physical examination.

Following this, the doctor may ask you to have some further tests such as a mammogram (a breast x-ray) and/or an ultrasound scan. In rare circumstances, this could include a biopsy.

You may also be asked to have a blood test.

## What can be done to treat gynecomastia?

In most cases, no treatment or follow-up is needed for gynecomastia.

If it occurs during puberty, then it usually resolves as boys get older and their hormone levels stabilize.

For some people, removing the cause of the gynecomastia (such as changing medications, reducing alcohol intake or losing weight) can solve the problem. However, it is important not to change or stop any prescribed medications without medical advice.

Very occasionally, your doctor may suggest that a medicine is prescribed to treat gynecomastia, however this can cause side-effects, and is only used as a short-term medication if there is associated tenderness.

Surgical treatment for gynecomastia is not available on the NHS.

## Who can I contact if I need more information?

If you need follow-up or support for this condition, book an appointment with your GP. You will be discharged back to your GP surgery after your first appointment.

Also, for further information about gynecomastia, please visit the NHS England website.

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/mens-health/what-is-gynecomastia/>

**This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care  
in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath**

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