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INSTANT BREAST-LIFT

*It's never been easier—or quicker—to give
your breasts a boost.*

By Jolene Edgar



BREASTS ARE SOMETHING of a Rorschach test in the female consciousness. They can be viewed as sexual, maternal, or—hello, 2018!—staunchly political (#freethenipple has accrued nearly four million posts on Instagram). Yet one thing has never been up for debate: When it comes to breasts, plenty of women seem to want theirs higher and tighter.

Breast-lifts are on the rise, soaring 13.9 percent in just the past year, and up a staggering 57.5 percent since 2012, according to the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. Sagging can plague any woman, young or mature, small- or large-chested. In fact, it's not uncommon, says Beverly Hills plastic surgeon Sheila Nazarian, M.D., for "patients in their 20s to have breasts that hang like those of a 60-year-old," especially if they've endured the hormonal and physical upheavals of pregnancy and nursing. Not only do the skin and ligaments stretch during this time (rarely rebounding fully), but "milk glands become less dense following pregnancy, as fat replaces some of the once-firm breast tissue, and this too contributes to drooping," explains Adam Kolker, M.D., a New York plastic surgeon. Babies aside, weight and hormonal fluctuations, along with the inescapable forces of genetics and gravity, can also lend a relaxed look.

In short, to sag is human. But the go-to surgical fix—a classic lift—has one big drawback: conspicuous scarring. "It's the main reason many women who need a lift will delay surgery or opt out," says Nazarian. Enter InMode's BodyTite. Recently cleared by the FDA, this device can lift and firm breasts without leaving any scars. By delivering bipolar radio-frequency (RF) energy to the skin's surface and underlying tissues, it tightens skin and ligaments, builds collagen, and liquefies fat, leaving breasts newly pert. How much so? Elie Levine, M.D., a plastic surgeon in New York, has seen the device "lift anywhere from one-and-a-half to five centimeters," he says. (Translation: Up to two inches.) Other doctors report somewhat less dramatic outcomes (closer to two centimeters). The cost? Between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

BodyTite uses a tiny internal cannula (an ultrathin rod), which is inserted into various points on the breast—at the fold and around the areola—to safely and precisely heat the area from the inside out, not just the outside in. As the cannula moves through the breast, a small round electrode traces its path on the surface of the skin, concentrating that rejuvenating RF energy between the two parts of the device. The one- to three-hour procedure (larger breasts take longer) is typically done under local anesthesia or IV sedation, and is considered to be minimally invasive. Though patients can go back to work the same day, some doctors recommend lying low for a few days to ride out the discomfort. You can expect up to two weeks of bruising and swelling, as well as temporary redness and tenderness.

While the results are "real and predictable," says Levine, the ideal candidate is someone with a C cup or smaller, a body mass index of less than 30, and skin that's healthy enough to crank out collagen. That's because once the procedure is over, RF's real work can start—by gradually growing collagen. You won't be wowed immediately post-treatment, but what follows is "quite remarkable," Levine adds. "Most people begin to notice the lift a few weeks after, and it really becomes evident two to three months out, with breasts continuing to tighten and lift for up to 24 months." How's that for a boost? ■

VICTOR DEMARCHELIER FOR *BAZAAR*