



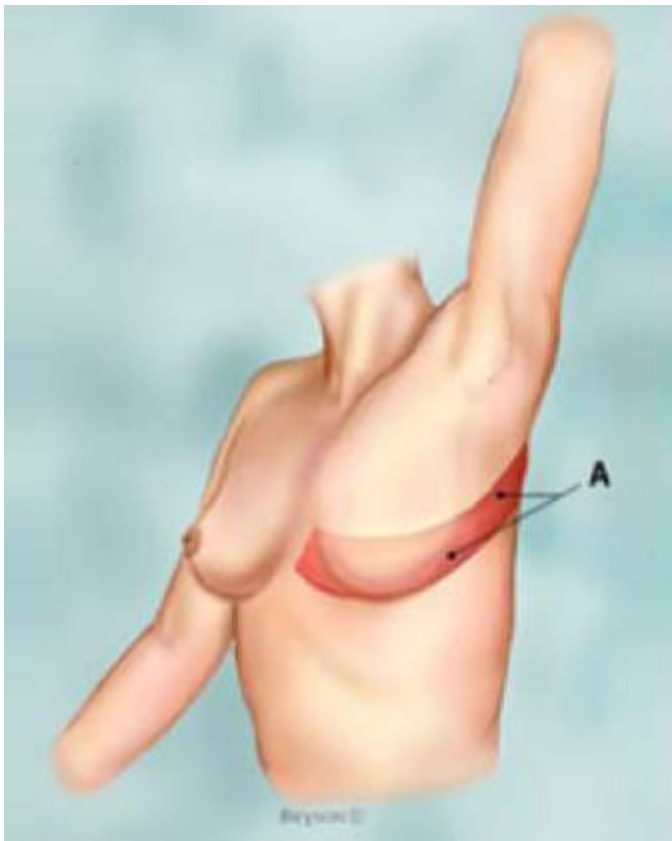
National Hereditary
Breast Cancer Helpline
01629 813000



Latissimus dorsi

This takes its name from the back muscle that lies below the shoulder and behind the armpit.

An oval section of skin, fat, and latissimus dorsi muscle is detached and slid around through a tunnel under the skin to the breast area. Blood vessels remain attached whenever possible. The tissue is shaped into a natural-looking breast and sewn into place. If blood vessels have been cut, they are reattached by microscopic surgery to blood vessels in the chest area. The procedure takes about two to three hours.



Latissimus Dorsi muscle in new location

In general, latissimus dorsi is only a good option for a woman with small- to medium-sized breasts, because there is so little body fat in this part of the back. An implant (inserted during the same operation) is almost always necessary to create a breast of moderate size.

Pluses and minuses of latissimus dorsi

- Plus: Many breast surgeons like this procedure because the flap is easily slipped around front, through a short tunnel in the skin, and put into position. Generally this procedure produces excellent results with few complications.
- Minus: The skin on your back has a different color and texture than breast skin.
- Minus: Latissimus dorsi also results in some back asymmetry (unevenness in the appearance of your back). Usually, though, back function and strength aren't affected.