

MY CHANGING BODY

Is it an issue if my breasts are different sizes?

KEY WORDS

breast | size | biology | puberty



Many women, no matter their age, have breasts that are different sizes. The term '**asymmetrical**' refers to the unevenness of breasts in terms of their shape, volume or the position of the areola and nipple. Slight differences in breast size and shape are often completely normal features in our anatomy and may even out over time, so they should not be considered a health problem.

However, there are cases where uneven breasts may require professional evaluation and perhaps even correction, especially if they coexist with troubling health symptoms and lower your quality of life.

The biological reasons behind breast asymmetry

In most cases, breast asymmetries have a physiological basis, which means it's a normal function that shows up in the way different bodies and their parts operate. Even if differences in breasts become more noticeable due to certain factors, you should not immediately consider it an issue.

Many factors influence the shape and size of the breasts:

- **Genetic factors**

If close family members, such as your mother or sister, have a certain breast size, there's a high chance yours will be similar.

- **Body weight**

Weight gain may increase breast size, while weight loss could result in a reduction.

- **Hormonal processes**

Estrogen and progesterone are hormones that impact breast size and changes, and this may occur for many young women during or just before menstruation.

- **Rate of growth and sexual maturation**

The rate at which you enter and progress through puberty can impact the timing and extent of breast development.

- **Physical activity**

Regular physical activity, especially exercises that target the chest muscles may impact the structure of the breasts.

When can breast asymmetry be a concern?

During adolescence, a difference in breast sizes can be a sign of underdevelopment of the mammary gland. This means that the glands which are responsible for later producing milk have not reached their full capacity, either because of hormonal balances, an insufficient diet or medical conditions. However, more often than not, small breasts do not point to underdevelopment and are completely normal!

The presence of scoliosis (curvature of the spine) may affect the appearance of the breasts as one side of the chest may appear more prominent or higher than the other because of the improper position of the spine affecting the ribcage and torso.

Tenderness, pain, redness, burning, or the presence of a palpable lump may be a sign of illness and would require a check-up with a doctor.

No matter what you may believe from watching media or listening to others, there's no standard or 'ideal' breast size: having slightly different-sized breasts is completely normal. Everyone's body is unique, and that includes the way our breasts develop. It's all part of growing up.

If you notice any sudden or big changes, it's a good idea to talk to a doctor or nurse, just to be sure everything's okay. But for the most part, embrace your body! It's going through changes, and that's perfectly fine.

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