

Breasts

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- Glandular and supporting fibrous tissue embedded in a fatty matrix along with blood vessels, lymphatics and nerves
- Mammary glands located in the subcutaneous tissue overlying the pectoralis major and minor muscle
- Nipple surrounded by areola (pigmented area of skin)
- Accessory to reproduction in women, redundant in men

Female breasts

- Fat surrounding the glandular tissue determines size of non-lactating breasts
- Bed of the breast extends from lateral sternum to the mid-axillary line, and from 2-6 ribs
 - 2/3 formed by pectoral fascia of pectoralis major
 - 1/3 formed from fascia of serratus anterior
- Retro-mammary space is a potential space located between the breast and pectoral fascia – contains fat, allowing some movement
- Axillary process is the extension of the mammary gland toward the armpit
- Mammary glands firmly attached to overlying skin and anchored by suspensory ligaments (of Cooper)
 - Fibrous connective tissue
- During puberty, the breasts enlarge mostly due to gland development but also due to increased fat deposition
 - Areola and nipple enlarge
 - Lactiferous ducts give rise to buds that develop into lobules (parenchyma)
- Each lobule is drained by a lactiferous duct, which dilate to form a lactiferous sinus deep to the areola
- Suckling by a neonate results in compression of the areola and expression of the milk droplets
- Areola contains sebaceous glands, which enlarge during pregnancy and secrete an oily substance as lubricant
- Nipples are conical prominences in the centre of the areola – no fat, hair or sweat glands
- Lactiferous ducts open up into the nipple, with circularly arranged smooth muscle that compress lactiferous ducts during lactation and erect in response to stimulation