



# 'My fake boobs stopped a killer bullet!'

Most women say a boob job makes them sexy and confident, but for Lydia Carranza it was the difference between life and death...



**T**he morning of 1 July 2009 had started out like any other for Lydia, a receptionist at a dental clinic.

The waiting room was filling up with patients gossiping to one another. Then suddenly all hell broke loose – a gunman burst into the surgery with a rifle.

"He charged around the office screaming for my colleague Mariela, who

was working in the back office," says Lydia, 41. "I didn't notice his face or who he was because all I could focus on was the huge gun he was carrying."

"It was really scary – he was staring straight at me. All the patients ran to the door, while my colleagues and I hid in the back room. I couldn't stop shaking."

Huddled in a room no bigger than a cupboard with Mariela and her other workmates, Gloria and Alex, Lydia grabbed the phone and called the police.

## In the line of fire

Suddenly, she heard shouting, followed by an ear-shattering noise. Mariela's 18-year-old brother – who also worked at the surgery – had confronted the gunman and been shot.

The intruder then changed into the tiny room, pointed his rifle at Mariela and shot four times at point-blank range, killing her outright, before turning his attention to Lydia and Gloria.

"I was terrified," says Lydia. "I put my right arm up to shield myself and suddenly felt the most excruciating pain explode

in my arm as the gunman shot me from about three metres away, before shooting Gloria."

"There was so much blood. I collapsed and pretended to be dead. I tried to stay calm and think about my three children and husband, Benny. I whispered to my workmates to pretend to be dead, too."

The gunman carried on stalking each room, firing bullets randomly and shouting: "I'm sorry, she made me do this."

It was then it suddenly dawned on Lydia that Mariela must have been his wife.

"I'd never met him, but I knew that she had recently asked her partner for a divorce," says Lydia.

But the terrifying ordeal was far from over. Moments later, the gunman lurched back into the room and shot Lydia again – this time in her chest.

She would have died on the spot – had it not been for the breast implant she'd had fitted five years before to boost her B-cup chest to a D.

Incredibly, the bullet had struck the saline implant, which had exploded in her chest. It acted as a cushion, stopping the bullet from damaging her major organs. At that point, though, Lydia was convinced she was dying.

## Amazing escape

"I thought he'd finish me off," she says. "I was in agony, but I held my breath and didn't move."

Finally, the horrific rampage came to an end after police

managed to persuade the gunman to surrender. Lydia was rushed to hospital where doctors managed to remove the exploded implant before infection set in.

When she regained consciousness after the extensive seven-hour surgery, she was stunned to discover that the implant had saved her life.

"It was a miracle," says Lydia. "The best money I'd ever spent."

Although she had a lucky escape, doctors warned her that tiny pieces of shrapnel were still lodged in her upper abdomen.

There was a remote possibility that if the pieces moved around her body, they could pierce one of her organs.

The bullet to her arm had also severed her nerve, meaning that it was uncertain whether she'd regain any feeling in her fingers.

At first, Lydia was just relieved that she'd survived, but she became increasingly conscious of the damage the bullet had inflicted on her right breast.

"I had a boob job because I thought my breasts were uneven," says Lydia. "I tried every fix – chicken fillets, padded bras – but

nothing worked, so I had surgery. After the shooting, I didn't mind not having that implant, but I began to feel horrible about my body. My chest was flat

on the right side, but I still had the D-cup on the left.

"I tried chicken fillets again, but I was paranoid people were staring at me. I even found it hard to undress in front of Benny. But he was wonderful and constantly told me how beautiful I was."

Lydia, though, didn't agree and decided to have another boob job. But she was in for crushing news. After visiting several consultants, she was told that due to the damage to her skin and tissue around the breast area, there was nothing they could do.

## The gift of surgery

"I felt so depressed," says Lydia. "Then my friend suggested a surgeon called Dr Ashkan Ghavami. He'd performed a boob job on her and she loved the results."

"He specialises in reconstructive surgery and when I told him my story he was so moved,

he told me that not only could he do the surgery, but he'd do it free! I was absolutely thrilled."

Dr Ghavami – who decided not to charge Lydia because

she "deserves to feel good about herself again" – will reconstruct her right breast. "Lydia will then be the happy

owner of two symmetrical boobs," he promises.

Lydia can't wait. She says: "Dr Ghavami has given me hope. My new matching boobs may not save my life, but they'll help me feel like a woman again!"

For info on Dr Ghavami, visit [www.ghavamiplasticsurgery.com](http://www.ghavamiplasticsurgery.com)

Lydia has her saline implants to thank for being here today to tell her story.



Her injury left Lydia's breasts uneven and she became depressed

Husband Benny has helped Lydia get over her ordeal



## How saline saved Lydia

Dr Ashkan Ghavami said: "A saline implant is a high pressure bag full of salt water, which provides more resistance than human tissue. When the bullet hit the implant, it exploded in her chest and stopped the bullet hitting any vital organs. The bullet fragments were millimetres from her heart and vital organs, so had she not had the implant, she might not be alive today. A silicone implant would have worked in a similar way."