

## ADVICE TO PATIENTS WITH METAL-ON-METAL HIPS

Johnson and Johnson (Depuy) has voluntarily recalled the ASR implant from the market around the world following a regulatory body recall in the United Kingdom. MHRA, which is the British Regulatory Body responsible for hip replacement devices, issued an alert to all hospitals and doctors in the United Kingdom in the fall of 2010. The reason that they have done this is that there have been some reports of adverse reactions to the wear particles in metal-on-metal bearing artificial hips in the British Joint Registry, the Australian Joint Registry and the New Zealand Joint Registry. This has resulted in this same implant (Depuy ASR) being pulled from the market in Canada.

The following Organizations are acting together to respond responsibly to this issue. The British Orthopaedic Association, The Australian Orthopaedic Association, The New Zealand Orthopaedic Association, The South African Orthopaedic Association, The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, the American Orthopaedic Association and the Canadian Orthopaedic Association.

Metal-on-metal hips can either be total hip replacements or hip resurfacing procedures.

The incidence of this problem is low and is somewhere between one and nine patients in every thousand fitted with metal-on-metal bearings. As you know, the reason your surgeon fitted a metal-on-metal bearing was because the published results show metal bearings to have very low wear rates. This very low wear rate would usually translate into a long-term successful implant for the patient.

The problem that has been reported is that some patients (relatively low percentage) have developed significant pain associated with damage to the soft tissues around the hip. A lot of research is being carried out in many Centres around the world to see how and why this happens.

In the meantime, we can give the following advice:

- If you have no pain and you are being followed up, you need do nothing else. You will remain on regular follow-up.
- If you are not sure whether you have a metal-on-metal hip replacement or resurfacing, contact the hospital or surgeon where the operation was performed and they will be able to tell you. **Most hip replacements in the Canada are not metal-on-metal bearings.**
- If you have a metal-on-metal hip, then contact the orthopaedic clinic where you attend for your usual follow-up appointments or your surgeon's office and they will arrange an outpatient assessment for you with your surgeon. **It should be stressed that if you have a metal-on-metal hip and no pain, the chances of you being affected are extremely small.**
- If you have a metal-on-metal implant and have concerns regarding the long-term effects, we urge you to discuss these issues with your surgeon. Almost all of these concerns can be carefully worked through with a good history and physical exam and routine radiographs.

- **If you do have pain**, then the Canadian Orthopaedic Association suggests that this should be investigated. Your surgeon will be able to do this and some investigative tests may be helpful. Your surgeon will decide what tests are required, given your symptoms and signs.

All orthopaedic surgeons in the country who are members of the Canadian Orthopaedic Association have been informed of this issue and the Canadian Orthopaedic Association and the Canadian Arthroplasty Subsection will update surgeons and patients as more information becomes available.

We look forward to working with you to maintain your successful total hip arthroplasty. If you are having significant symptoms, your orthopaedic surgeon will help you solve this issue and find a solution that works for you in our patient focused health care environment.

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