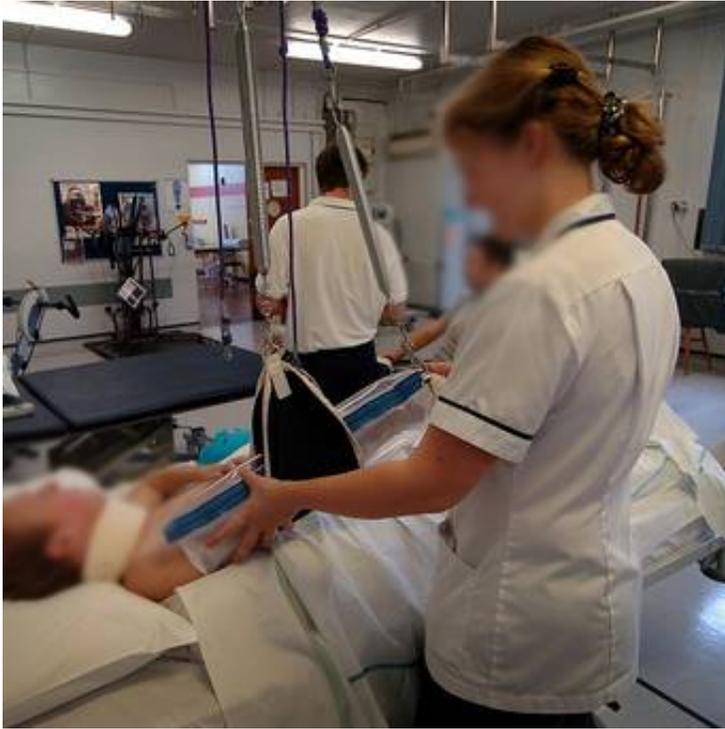


# Ban on 'toxic' hip replacements



## Latest health news

26 October 2013

Fitting "toxic" metal-on-metal hip replacements will be banned at [NHS](#) hospitals after an unacceptably high failure rate was found among 17,000 patients.

The guidance was issued by a health watchdog after research found failure rates as high as 43% among some of the implants, the Daily Telegraph said.

Surgeons are concerned that joints are wearing away and failing far too early and there are fears that some can leak toxic metal.

Orthopaedic surgeon Martyn Porter said seeing the failure rates was like "watching a car crash in slow motion - at first, you just don't know how bad it is going to be".

New guidelines from regulators say the [NHS](#) should stop using any hip implants with failure rates higher than 5% at five years.

This would mean that almost every metal-on-metal implant, including five still in use, would have to be banned.

Research of all hip surgery in England, [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#) found most metal-on-metal implants had unacceptable failure levels, falling below standards set by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice).

One implant, the DePuy ASR required secondary surgery in almost a quarter of cases during the first five years, the Telegraph said.

Manufacturers admitted to failure rates of 13% in that time, and the device was withdrawn.

Nice found that after nine years failure rates were estimated at 43%.

Six metal-on-metal models and a ceramic-on-metal model implanted in more than 11,00 patients having hip resurfacing procedures had five-year failure rates of 5% or worse. Some rose to 16% within nine years, figures show.

Just two types of metal-on-metal implant fall within the proposed national standard, the study found.

Stephen Cannon, an honorary consultant surgeon for the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, welcomed the report.

He said: "I think there is a question about whether it goes far enough, but this is definitely a step in the right direction - it amounts to a ban on most of them.

"The figures speak for themselves - even the best metal-on-metals have four times the failure rate of the rest. This is a really significant problem because these were given to an awful lot of people."

Mr Porter, past president of the British Hip Society, said the full scale of the failings was only now becoming clear and that the scale of the problem was "extremely disappointing".

He said: "These devices, which were supposed to be innovative, had such poor results."

Some senior surgeons have called for all types of the implant to be removed from the market.

DePuy said it has discontinued the metal-on-metal variant of its Corail/Pinnacle implants because of low use.

Traditional implants use a metal ball in a plastic socket.



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