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U.K. poised to ban metal-on-metal hips

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 October 30, 2013 by [Brad Perriello](#)

Metal-on-metal hip implants could be banned in the U.K. after a review of 17,000 cases finds unacceptably high failure rates.

Regulators in the U.K. are reportedly poised to ban the use of metal-on-metal hip implants after finding unacceptably high rates of failure in a review of 17,000 cases.



The proposed ban, which would affect hospitals in the U.K.'s National Health Service, follows a review by the country's National Institute for Health & Care Excellence that found failure rates as high as 43% for some of the implants, *The Telegraph* reported.

The NICE recommended that NHS hospitals stop using any implant with failure rates exceeding 5%, which would take virtually every metal-on-metal implant there out of the health system, according to the newspaper. Two metal-on-metal hip implants barely meet the requirement, according to *The Telegraph*.

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Metal-on-metal hip implants came under scrutiny following [the high-profile August 2010 recall](#) of DePuy Orthopaedics' ASR XL acetabular and ASR hip resurfacing systems. Johnson & Johnson pulled the devices off the market after receiving reports that a higher-than-normal number of patients required surgeries to correct or remove defective implants.

Some reports warned that hundreds of thousands of [patients may have also been exposed to toxic compounds](#) from metal-on-metal implants, putting them at risk of developing cancer, cardiomyopathy, muscle and bone destruction and changes to their DNA. Since then [the controversy has ensnared device makers](#) such as [Smith & Nephew](#) (FTSE:SN, NYSE:SNN) and [Biomet](#), with personal injury lawsuits piling up even against MoM hip implants that [haven't undergone a recall](#).

The NICE audit across the pond found that the DePuy ASR device posted a failure rate of 43% after 9 years and also found high failure rates for metal-on-metal hip resurfacing implants, the newspaper reported.

"I think there is a question about whether [the proposed ban] goes far enough, but this is definitely a step in the right direction – it amounts to a ban on most of them," Dr. Stephen Cannon of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital told *The Telegraph*. "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."

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