



How reliable will my new joint be?

Recalls of hip and knee replacement implants can cause understandable concern on the part of both patients and physicians. Those who have had joint replacement surgery with implants that were subsequently recalled may wonder if their health will be compromised or if they will need further surgery. If you are considering joint replacement surgery, you may be apprehensive about the longevity of the implants utilized.

Orthopaedic surgeons, national databases of implant performance called “registries,” as well as implant manufacturers closely scrutinize outcomes of joint replacement implants. Fortunately, implant recalls are rare and affect a very small fraction of the more than seven million patients with hip and knee replacements. **Recall of a specific implant does not mean that all patients with that implant will have adverse health consequences or require surgery to have the implants removed.** Many implants have been utilized in joint replacement surgeries for over ten years without ever being recalled, and these implants will likely never be recalled.

If an implant is recalled, it cannot ever be used in a joint replacement surgery again.

Despite extensive laboratory testing, implants with newer technologies aimed at improving patient outcomes may have unacceptably high failure rates once used in large numbers of patients. If such an implant is recalled, the manufacturer notifies surgeons who have used the implant.

Your joint replacement surgeon can most effectively discuss implications of an implant recall, and serve as your advocate, if you are affected. Surgeons will closely monitor patients with recalled implants to ensure that they remain healthy and intervention is prompt if a problem is found. Contact your joint replacement surgeon with any questions you have about implant recalls.



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This article has been written and peer reviewed by the AAHKS Patient and Public Relations Committee and the AAHKS Evidence Based Medicine Committee. Links to these pages or content used from the articles must be given proper citation to the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons.

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