

# Medical Device Alert

## Action

Ref: MDA/2010/033 Issued: 22 April 2010 at 14:00

### Device

All metal-on-metal (MoM) hip replacements.

### Problem

The MHRA has received reports of revisions of MoM hip replacements involving soft tissue reactions. These reactions may be associated with unexplained hip pain.

### Action by

- Medical directors
- Orthopaedic departments
- Orthopaedic surgeons
- Staff involved in the management of patients with joint replacement implants.

### CAS deadlines

Action underway: 21 May 2010  
Action complete: 17 June 2010

Note: These deadlines are for systems to be in place to take actions and not for the completion of patient follow-up and testing.

### Action

Put systems in place for the follow-up of patients implanted with MoM hip replacements including, where appropriate, blood metal ion measurements and cross sectional imaging.

## Problem

The majority of patients implanted with MoM hip replacements have well functioning hips and are thought to be at a low risk of developing serious problems.

A small number of patients implanted with these hips may, however, develop progressive soft tissue reactions to the wear debris associated with MoM articulations. The debris can cause soft tissue necrosis and adversely affect the results of revision surgery. Early revision of poorly performing MoM hip replacements should give a better revision outcome.

Following extensive consultation with orthopaedic experts and using information from the National Joint Registry for England and Wales, the MHRA is issuing this interim advice to healthcare professionals involved in the management of patients implanted with MoM hip replacements.

The MHRA is continuing to monitor the situation in consultation with orthopaedic experts and may issue further advice.

## Action

For patients implanted with MoM hip replacements:

- follow up patients at least annually for five years postoperatively and more frequently in the presence of symptoms. Beyond five years, follow up in accordance with locally agreed protocols
- investigate patients with painful MoM hip replacements. Specific tests should include evaluation of cobalt and chromium ion levels in the patient's blood and cross sectional imaging including MRI or ultrasound scan
- consider measuring cobalt and chromium ion levels in the blood and/or cross sectional imaging for the following patient groups:
  - > patients with radiological features associated with adverse outcomes including component position
  - > patients with small component size (hip resurfacing arthroplasty only)
  - > cases where the patient or surgeon is concerned about the MoM hip replacement
  - > cohorts of patients where there is concern about higher than expected rates of failure
- if either cobalt or chromium ion levels are elevated above seven parts per billion (ppb), then a second test should be performed three months after the first in order to identify patients who require closer surveillance, which may include cross sectional imaging
- if imaging reveals soft tissue reactions, fluid collections or tissue masses then consider revision surgery.

Note: Measurements of cobalt or chromium ions should be carried out by laboratories participating in the Trace Elements External Quality Assessment Scheme (TEQAS) (<http://www.sas-centre.org/home.html>).

## Distribution

This MDA has been distributed to:

- NHS trusts in England (Chief Executives)
- HSC trusts in Northern Ireland (Chief Executives)
- NHS boards in Scotland (Chief Executives)
- NHS boards and trusts in Wales (Chief Executives)
- Care Quality Commission (Headquarters)
- Primary care trusts in England (Chief Executives)

### **Onward distribution**

Please bring this notice to the attention of all who need to know or be aware of it. This may include distribution by:

#### **Trusts to:**

CAS and SABS (NI) liaison officers for onward distribution to all relevant staff including:

- Clinical governance leads
- Medical directors
- Nursing executive directors
- Orthopaedic departments
- Orthopaedic surgeons
- Outpatient clinics
- Outpatient theatre managers
- Outpatient theatre nurses
- Pathologists
- Radiology departments
- Radiology directors
- Risk managers
- Theatre managers

#### **Care Quality Commission (CQC) (England only) to:**

The MHRA considers this information to be important to:

- Hospitals in the independent sector
- Independent treatment centres
- Private medical practitioners

#### **Primary care trusts to:**

- Directors of public health
- General practitioners
- NHS walk-in centres

## **England**

If you are in England, please send enquiries about this notice to the MHRA, quoting reference number **MDA/2010/033 or 2010/004/019/291/007**

#### **Technical aspects**

Ms Feza Haque or Dr Crina Cacou or Dr Khalid Razak  
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London SW8 5NQ

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#### **Clinical aspects**

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#### **How to report adverse incidents**

Please report via our website <http://www.mhra.gov.uk>

Further information about **CAS** can be found at <https://www.cas.dh.gov.uk/Home.aspx>

## Northern Ireland

Alerts in Northern Ireland will continue to be distributed via the NI SABS system.

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Northern Ireland should be addressed to:

Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre

Health Estates Investment Group

Room 17

Annex 6

Castle Buildings

Stormont Estate

Dundonald BT4 3SQ

Tel: 02890 523 704

Fax: 02890 523 900

Email: [NIAIC@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:NIAIC@dhsspsni.gov.uk)

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hea/niaic.htm>

### How to report adverse incidents in Northern Ireland

Please report directly to NIAIC, further information can be found on our website <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/niaic>

Further information about **SABS** can be found at <http://sabs.dhsspsni.gov.uk/>

## Scotland

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Scotland should be addressed to:

Incident Reporting and Investigation Centre

Health Facilities Scotland

NHS National Services Scotland

Gyle Square

1 South Gyle Crescent

Edinburgh EH12 9EB

Tel: 0131 275 7575

Fax: 0131 314 0722

Email: [nss.irc@nhs.net](mailto:nss.irc@nhs.net)

<http://www.hfs.scot.nhs.uk/online-services/incident-reporting-and-investigation-centre-irc/>

## Wales

Enquiries in Wales should be addressed to:

Dr Sara Hayes

Senior Medical Officer

Medical Device Alerts

Welsh Assembly Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Tel: 029 2082 3922

Email: [Haz-Aic@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Haz-Aic@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

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