Metal-On-Metal Primary Total Hip Implants Usage To Decline

Millennium Research Group (MRG), the global authority on medical technology market intelligence, finds that 25% of the 150 orthopedic surgeons surveyed in its newest Physician Forum publication plan to reduce their usage of metal-on-metal hip implants over the next twelve months.

Metal-on-metal hip implants have been the subject of close media scrutiny in recent months due to reports of metal debris and soft-tissue damage resulting in revision surgeries in some patients.

MRG's Physician Forum publication, Metal-on-Metal Hip Implants: Bad Idea, or Just Bad Press?,is based on a US survey of 150 orthopedic surgeons and investigates physician opinions on these implants, and whether bad press has affected their practice or clinical decision-making.

In March and April of this year, articles from The New York Times and The Sunday Times came out citing concerns about the implants. On March 6, DePuy issued a warning letter to US physicians about failure rates associated with its ASR acetabular cups, and on April 22, the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Review Agency (MHRA) issued a medical device alert for all metal-on-metal implants.

"Continued negative media and clinical focus have led some orthopedic surgeons to be wary of metal-on-metal implants," says Melissa Hussey, Senior Analyst at MRG. "A significant minority stated they will curtail usage of these devices in primary total hip arthroplasty in favor of alternative bearing surfaces such as ceramic-on-polyethylene. This is not a universal trend, however; most metal-on-metal current users remain devoted fans, seeing superior range of motion, low revision rates, and generally good success."

The top five hip replacement implant manufacturers - Biomet, DePuy, Smith & Nephew, Stryker, and Zimmer - generate the vast majority of the metal-on-metal implant market revenues in the US. While all companies received moderately high satisfaction ratings, surveyed orthopedic surgeons indicated the highest degree of satisfaction with DePuy and Biomet metal-on-metal implants based on the superior performance of these implants, and their ease of implantation.

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