

Endoprotheses – Metal Bone Replacements

Problems with metal bone replacements are fortunately very rare. You will probably still be seen in an orthopaedic clinic. If you have any problems you should contact them or your oncology clinic. The two most important problems are:

Loosening: As you grow, and with time, the cement holding the metal in place may shake loose. If this happens it will need to be cemented back in place. This involves a further major operation. It is more likely to happen if you are overweight or very active.

Infection: If bacteria circulate in the blood stream they can settle next to the metal bone replacement and start an infection. All bacterial infections must be promptly treated with antibiotics; this includes all abscesses, boils, urinary infections and particularly in-growing toenails. Also, if there is any possibility of infection when you have dental treatment you must have antibiotics. Always tell your dentist that you have a metal bone replacement.

The signs of an infected metal bone replacement are:

- Pain and redness near the scar and/or
- The sudden development of stiffness and an increased temperature of the limb.

If the infection is not treated very quickly the metal bone replacement may need to be removed. Early detection is vital so if in any doubt contact a doctor.

Having a “man made” bone implant is never quite as good as normal bone and you may need to modify your lifestyle a bit. If you take care of yourself most metal bone replacements last 15-20 years before there is a chance that they need to be changed.

I didn't beat cancer to spend the rest of my life worrying!

Vanessa Moss

visit www.aftercure.org for tips, advice and other useful websites

Keep a record of sites you find useful: