

# 'Metal hip replacements aren't reliable'

**London:** People who get metal hip replacements are more likely to need a replacement compared to those who get a traditional plastic one, states a new report from a large British registry.

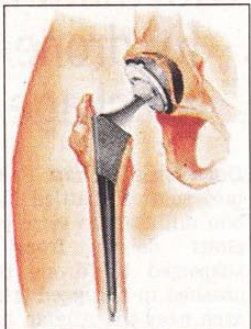
The report on Thursday from the National Joint Registry of England and Wales could lead to more caution among doctors when performing hip replacements. Earlier studies already led to a drop in the use of metal joints.

Almost 14 per cent of patients who got an all-metal replacement needed the joint removed or replaced after seven years. That compares with just 3 per cent of patients who got a joint made of plastic and needed a replacement within the same time.

Traditional hip replacements usually last more than 10 years, but British officials noted some of the replacements were failing within a few years. The average age of patients getting the replacements was 67 years.

The UK registry includes records from about 1 million people who had hip, knee, and ankle replacements and is the world's largest joint database. There is no similar registry in the US.

Last year's report of the British registry on the failure rate of one type of metal replacements made by a division of Johnson & Johnson led to its recall by the US Food and Drug Administration. Among patients who received the Johnson & Johnson metal hip, almost 30 per cent needed a new one. Since the recall, use of all-metal hip replacements has fallen. In 2006, metal replacements were used in about 15 per cent of procedures; that's now dropped to about 5 per cent. AP



**HIPS DON'T LIE**