



Every day in America almost two hundred knee and hip replacement surgeries take place. Regrettably, a significant percentage of them are second, or "revision" procedures since the initial implant device prematurely wore out, or broke up, inside the hip or knee joint.



Individuals who had original hip or knee replacement surgery since 1988, and within ten years of that first procedure, required a second or "revision," replacement, or are even considering one, may be entitled to financial compensation due to the manufacturing defect in the device.

Bernadette Buhler, our firm's Knee and Hip Replacement Coordinator, is always available to review your replacement medical history, any symptoms you are currently experiencing, or to answer your questions. Simply call her at our 24 hour toll free telephone number noted below. Also, more information is available on our website: www.dearielaw.com by simply clicking "Knee and Hip Replacement."

24 HOUR TOLL FREE
1-800-2-DEARIE
(1-800-233-2743)
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- 1. Approximately how many knee and hip replacement surgeries have occurred over the past twenty years?**
It is estimated that at least 1.4 million implants have been sold in the United States over the past twenty years averaging 70,000 per year.
- 2. For how long is a knee or hip replacement device expected to last?**
Generally, the life expectancy of an artificial knee or hip implant is 15-20 years.
- 3. What is it that may be wrong with my knee or hip implant?**
The manufacturers of many of these knee and hip implants used a process called gamma irradiation to sterilize the implant that rendered them defective. This process caused the polyethylene (a type of plastic in knee and hip implants) to wear out and break apart in the body causing severe pain in the groin, buttock, inner thigh, knee and leg area making weight-bearing painful, often requiring a crutch or cane.
- 4. What manufacturers were using this defectively sterilized plastic?**
Most, if not all, of the major knee and hip replacement manufacturers used this defective gamma irradiation manufacturing process, at one time or another.
- 5. Why did the manufacturers use this defective part?**
In plain terms: money. The manufacturing process used to sterilize these knee and hip implants rendered them defective and unsuitable for implantation. Despite this knowledge, these manufacturers continued to use this flawed sterilization method because it was cheaper than other manufacturing techniques.
- 6. Is the defective plastic-like material still being used in today's implant devices?**
No. While polyethylene is still used, it is no longer sterilized using the gamma irradiation technique that causes the plastic in the implant to fail.
- 7. Would my doctor, or surgeon, have known about the defect in the device, prior to my original surgery?**
No. Although the manufacturers were very much aware of the defects in these knee and hip devices, they never informed doctors or patients and continued to manufacture and sell these implants. Therefore, from a legal perspective, this would be a "products liability" case, NOT a medical malpractice one.
- 8. If I have one of these defective devices inserted into my knee or hip, what will happen?**
The plastic component of the knee and hip implants may eventually wear out prematurely. This causes the device itself to fail and also causes osteolysis. Eventually the device could fail altogether and require a second surgery called a "revision surgery" to repair, or replace, the defective implant with another implant.
- 9. What is osteolysis?**
Osteolysis is a condition where the body, thinking that it is fighting an infection, accidentally attacks and erodes the healthy bone around the implant. This will cause the device to fail even more quickly and will make a revision surgery more severe as the bone stock needed for such a revision surgery may be affected.
- 10. What are the most common symptoms people have experienced with a defective knee or hip replacement?**
Symptoms which may indicate a problem with your implant include: pain, swelling and limitation on range of motion, and eventually, device failure and the need for a revision surgery. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, you should talk to your doctor. If you have had to undergo a revision surgery, or are presently planning one, to repair or replace the implant, you should immediately seek legal advice.
- 11. Has any hip replacement manufacturer ever issued a recall on the devices?**
Yes, one manufacturer recalled almost 25,000 hip implant devices, of which, unfortunately, over 17,500 had already been implanted in patients. An oily compound used during the manufacturing process prevented adhesion of the device to the hip bone.
- 12. How do I know the manufacturer's name of a defective knee or hip implant?**
Generally, you will not; however, your medical records from the original implant surgery contains the information identifying the implant device manufacturer. Therefore, obtaining your medical records, with your written authorization, will be necessary.
- 13. What if I've already had a revision surgery?**
Then you should immediately seek legal advice to protect your rights. Remember, you have a limited time period to seek recovery for your injuries, so make sure you speak to an attorney to protect your rights against the manufacturers of these defective implants.
- 14. Where can I find out more information?**
You can call toll free: 1-800-2-DEARIE (1-800-233-2743) for a free consultation with an attorney. Our attorney will listen to your personal history regarding symptoms, medical conditions and surgery and offer guidance while explaining to you your legal rights and necessary steps for possible financial recovery.



HIP JOINT MODEL



KNEE JOINT MODEL

