

Our reference: CEM/CMO/2011/18

Gateway ref: 17072

23 December 2011

Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS
Tel: +44 (0)20 7210 5150-4
Fax: +44 (0)20 7210 5407

To:
General Practitioners
NHS Medical Directors
Cancer and Plastic Surgeons

Dear Colleague

PIP SILICONE GEL BREAST IMPLANTS

You may already be aware of today's recommendation by the French Government that all women in France who have PIP breast implants should have them removed as a pre-cautionary, but non-urgent measure because of their concerns about high rates of implant rupture.

In the UK, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is not however recommending routine removal because they have no evidence of any disproportionate rate of implant rupture. Moreover, there is no evidence of any increase in incidence of cancer associated with these implants. The MHRA expert advisers do not therefore believe that the risks associated with surgery from breast implant removal can be justified in the absence of further evidence.

The MHRA has previously commissioned toxicity testing on the filler, including genotoxicity and chemical toxicity, discussed this with their experts and concluded that there is no associated safety issue. The MHRA have also reviewed available evidence for association of cancers of women with breast implants in consultation with the relevant UK professional bodies for breast surgery and surgical oncology and with the Cancer Registry, and have concluded there is no evidence to indicate any association.

MHRA have discussed with experts the question of breast feeding in women with PIP implants and concluded that there is no safety issue.

The Department will be keeping this under close review, and MHRA experts will continue to examine any further domestic or international evidence on this issue and will respond accordingly.

A copy of the MHRA press statement can be viewed and downloaded at:
<http://www.mhra.gov.uk/NewsCentre/Pressreleases/CON137935>

In the meantime, I recommend that all patients who present with questions or concerns about their breasts implants should be reassured in line with the present evidence as above, and advised to seek further advice if needed from their implanting surgeon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sally C Davies', is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**PROFESSOR DAME SALLY C DAVIES
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
CHIEF SCIENTIFIC ADVISER**