



December 23rd 2011

Questions / Réponses

Useful information for women with PIP (Poly Implant Prosthèse) breast implants

23 December 2011

Green Number for public inquiries:

0800 636 636

Open from Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Open on 23/12 until 8 p.m. and 24/12 until 6 p.m.

Closed on Sunday 25/12/2011

Xavier Bertrand, Minister of Labour, Employment and Health, and Nora Berra, Secretary of State for Public Health, would like to have the removal of these implants proposed to women who have them, even in the absence of clinical symptoms of deterioration. This proposal may be made when they consult with their surgeon, which has already been recommended.

What should I do if I have breast implants?

Women with breast implants should check the brand of their implant(s) on the card that was given to them. If they do not have this card, they should contact their surgeon or, if that is not possible, the institution that performed the surgery.

What should I do if I have a PIP implant?

Patients who have PIP implants should consult with their surgeon to make an appointment as soon as their surgeon deems practical. On that occasion, an offer will be made to remove their implant(s), even in the absence of clinical signs of deterioration. If they do not wish to have it removed, they should have the benefit of monitoring by breast and underarm echography exams every 6 months.

Any rupture, suspected rupture or oozing from an implant must lead to it being removed, along with the second breast implant (if any).

Before any removal, for whatever reason, an imaging work-up (including a mammography and breast and underarm echography exams) done recently should be available.

I don't know if I have PIP breast implants (no implant card, no post-operative report). What should I do?

If you do not have an implant card or post-operative report, we recommend that you contact your surgeon or, if that is not possible, the institution where the surgery was performed. Access to the file is an obligation for the healthcare institution and the patient is legally entitled to such access.

How can I find the contact information and/or address of an institution capable of removing the implant?

We recommend that women with breast implants **pre-filled with PIP silicone gel** contact their surgeon to make an appointment as soon as the surgeon deems practical. This consultation will allow a decision to be made about the proper procedure to follow and removal may be offered depending on each person's particular case.

Starting in January 2012, Regional Health Agencies (RHA) will set up a hot-line for patients who have PIP breast implants, and who may have difficulty reaching a physician, in order to offer them a list of institutions where they may receive care. This list will also be available on the Internet.

What are the general provisions for reimbursement for examinations and repeat surgeries related to the use of breast implants containing PIP silicone gel?

The conditions for reimbursement by the National Health Plan are as follows:

- All women with PIP breast implants will be reimbursed for their medical and surgical expenses related to the removal (echography exams, lab tests, removal of the implant, post-operative verification exams);
- Women who had reconstruction work done after surgery for breast cancer will also be reimbursed for the insertion of a new implant.

Please see the National Health Plan's Questions and Answers section at: <http://www.ameli.fr/assures/soins-et-remboursements/combien-serez-vous-rembourse/implants-mammaires.php>

I had my operation done abroad. How can I find out if I have implants filled with PIP-brand silicone gel?

The surgeon who operated on you (or the healthcare institution where your surgery was performed) has your case file and all of the data concerning the type and brand of your implant. It will be able to tell you whether or not you have a PIP-brand implant. Lastly, for French citizens residing abroad, a bulletin has been distributed to all French embassies.

I have been abroad for 2 years. How should I go about obtaining reimbursement for removal of the implant?

If you contact the primary health insurance agency where you were registered before going abroad, they will describe the measures for your specific situation.

What can I do to obtain compensation for damages?

In addition to the court proceedings currently under way, women with PIP breast implants who have suffered damages may submit a claim for indemnification to the Commission on Compensation for Victims of Malpractice (CIVI). Women who have undergone breast reconstruction after a mastectomy due to cancer may submit claims to the Regional Settlements and Indemnifications Commission (CRCI), which is under the aegis of the ONIAM (National Office for Indemnification of Medical Accidents).