

Orthopaedic Department

Femoral head donation

**How you can help others
if you are having a hip replacement**



What is femoral head donation?

During your hip operation, we will replace the damaged surfaces of your arthritic hip with an artificial one. The hip joint is a ball and joint socket, made up of the femoral head (top of the thigh bone, or femur) and the acetabulum, which is part of the pelvis.

For hip replacement surgery, we remove the femoral head and replace it with a metal or ceramic joint. In rare cases, if you have some bone loss in your socket, your femoral head bone is used to build it up. All unused bone is then destroyed in a safe manner, in accordance with the Human Tissue Act.

What is the femoral head?

The femoral head is part of the hip joint, and is usually discarded after the operation. However, beneath the damaged cartilage surface of the femoral head there remains healthy bone tissue. This makes the femoral head an ideal source of bone graft.

We are able to use donated femoral heads to reconstruct the hip socket in people whose artificial hips have worn out and need replacing. Although this can be done using other methods, the best way is to use human bone.

We are very lucky in Basingstoke to have been licensed to collect and use human bone in revision hip surgery and other occasions where new bone is needed.

As you will have no need for your femoral head once it has been removed, we would like you to consider donating it. We can then store and use it for people who might need to have extra bone during their surgery.

What happens if I decide to donate my bone?

When you come for your appointment at the pre-admission assessment clinic, we will ask you to complete a short questionnaire. If you are a suitable candidate, we will ask you to sign a consent form, agreeing to allow us to use your bone.

We will then need to do the following blood tests:

- The first blood test will be done at your pre-admission assessment appointment. You will already need to have some blood taken for your pre-operative tests and so a small amount of extra blood can be taken at the same time.
- Six months later, we will ask you to have a second blood test. This is to make sure that you are not carrying any viruses or infections that could be passed on to another person if your donated bone was used. **These are the same tests which are done if you are a blood donor.**

Once we have two clear blood tests, your femoral head – which will have been stored in a very cold freezer since your operation – is released to us. We can then use it to rebuild the sockets of people who need extra bone, such as for first and revision hip replacements, knee replacements and people who have broken bones in accidents.

We would be grateful if you would consider donating your femoral head for use in this way.

For further information or if you have any queries or concerns about femoral head donation, please do not hesitate to ask your doctor or nurse. Alternatively, you can contact the orthopaedic pre-admission assessment clinic on 01256 313570.

www.hampshirehospitals.nhs.uk