
Knee and hip replacement a dangerous option for the morbidly obese**Wednesday 10 May, 2017**

Obesity doesn't just affect your appearance. It affects you psychologically, socially and physically.

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) in Adelaide this week has been told that Australia's obese have an increased risk of heart disease, type-2 diabetes and stroke.

It can also put extra pressure on joints and limbs and make surgical procedures such as joint replacement more necessary but also more dangerous.

According to Dr John McNicholl, orthopaedic registrar at Queensland's Toowoomba Hospital, his hospital has ceased to offer arthroplasty (total joint replacement) to patients who present with a body mass index (BMI) of more than 40 in line with recommendations from the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS).

"Obesity is a major risk factor for the development of osteoarthritis (OA) of the hip and knee.

"However our audits have identified obese patients who undergo either hip or knee arthroplasty are more likely to return to hospital, and more likely to suffer infections that require re-operation," he said.

Dr McNicholl's audits involved measuring the radiographic grade of OA in patients of different BMIs who were undergoing total joint arthroplasty, and then comparing the complications.

A total of 111 suitable patients were identified for the audit from clinical data collected from patient charts and records. Of patients receiving arthroplasty, 46 per cent were male and 54 per cent were female.

Significant difference were found in the results of the surgery and post-operative complications encountered.

Dr John McNicholl's presentation further explored bariatric arthroplasty in Toowoomba, said to be the most obese region in Australia .

For more information about the Annual Scientific Congress please visit: www.asc.surgeons.org

About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7000 surgeons and 1300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck

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Media inquiries:

Gabrielle Forman t: +61 3 9276 7430 | m: +61 498 218 008