

Hi, My name is Suellen telford. I am submitting a submission to tell you how pip breast implants have effected my life.

I got the implants in may 2009. I financed the surgery by adding to my home loan. I researched the entire process and thought I was completely aware of the possible risks involved. My surgeon, Dr _____ recommended Pips to me, and i was told they would last a minimum of 10 years.

I found out about the recall of pips in december from a news report I saw on TV. I knew I had pips, but wasn't too concerned as I hadn't been contacted by my surgeon. I couldn't even get in contact with my surgeon until the end of January as his whole office was closed for holidays. I sat down at the computer and started looking for any information I could find regarding pips. I was absolutely mortified and worried after reading all of the reports and media stories. I was also extremely confused, as reports from the TGA were conflicting with other things I was reading. Here we had the TGA saying they are fine, no cause for alarm and there's no evidence suggesting they are poisonous or that they rupture any easier or faster than other types of implants.

As soon as I was able I spoke to my surgeon and asked him for a referral for an MRI report. My surgeon, also said there was no cause for alarm and that pips were perfectly safe.

I had my referral at the end of February and found out that my right implant had ruptured and my left had folds. I also have silicone in my lymph nodes.

Obviously I am extremely anxious. I'm wondering how is it that "cohesive silicone gel" is able to migrate and get into my lymph nodes. I was told that cohesive gel would retain its shape and not separate even in the unlikely event of a rupture. I'm also wondering how it's possible to get folds in an implant. My view is that the left implant is obviously leaking.

I am very disappointed in the TGA and their handling of this whole situation. These things are known to be made with non-medical grade silicone! I am sick of hearing the TGA telling us that there is no evidence and they need to be tested, and then them saying that they tested the outer shell. I would like to know if they have actually tested a wide range of these implants that have been explanted from women. Tested the silicone, the shell, test what happens when the industrial grade silicone contained in them are put inside a warm, wet environment and see what happens. They deem them safe, yet hospitals will not release ruptured implants that have been explanted to anyone as they class them as a biohazard!

I find it absolutely disgraceful that the pips were recalled from "shelves" in 2010, yet the implanted ones were not recalled? Why? How is it deemed safe or appropriate to recall a product and prevent it from further use, but allow it to be left inside thousands of women's chests? And not even bother notifying these women? I bought a new Ford Territory in 2008. Since then, I have had to take my car in on three different occasions as components had been recalled! I didn't have to pay for these replacements or labour and every time I received a letter from Ford to inform me of the situation.

I paid over \$10,000.00 for my surgery. It hasn't even been 3 years and I now need to get them replaced at my own cost. How is that fair? Why do I need to pay out of my own pocket for something the TGA approved and allowed to be used as a medical device? I can't afford to replace them! I can't consolidate and refinance my house as property values have dropped and I don't have enough equity, I can't get or even afford to repay another loan. I don't have anyone financially able to give me the money. I am currently trying to sell possessions to raise the money. I'm lucky in that I have found a new surgeon, as my original surgeon was trying to charge me over \$15,000 to remove and replace. My new surgeon has given me a 25% discount on his fees, but I still need to come up with nearly \$9000. I am a mother to 4 boys. I work 24 hours a day as a family day care provider to pay the bills and provide for my children. If I can come up with the money, I am then off work for about 2 weeks without pay. As I'm self-employed, I don't have sick pay or annual leave. I don't have health insurance. Ironically I have every other type of insurance and never claimed. The one type of insurance I do need, I don't have.

This entire situation has had a negative effect on my entire life, which is also affecting my children, family and friends. I know that I have ruptured industrial grade silicone implants inside me. I know that they have made me sick. I know that I cannot afford to get them removed and replaced. I am not sleeping, I'm too scared to exercise, too scared to play with my children and my family day care children in case I do more damage. I've put on weight, which obviously isn't healthy. I am extremely stressed and constantly crying or upset.

I was told that we could go through the public health system to get them removed but not replaced.. we could get a breast lift at the same time as removal, but simply no replacement. I got implants because after having 4 children and feeding them, I wanted to improve the way they looked and therefore how I felt about myself. I paid for them myself and find it deeply upsetting that because of a lacking system I am put in this situation.

I don't understand how other countries are recommending and funding removal, yet Australia seems to be taking a wait and see attitude! That's really not good enough for me. These implants contain Silopren, Silopren and Rhodorsil. Ingredients in things such as rubber tubing, Mattress filler and computer components just to name a few. What will their long term health issues be for me and all the other women with these implants? What will be the long term health issues for the babies that were breastfed while their mothers had ruptured, leaking implants that they didn't know about because nobody deemed it necessary to inform us about this?

I think the government needs to be held accountable and not only provide compensation to every single woman with pips to fund removal and replacement, pain and suffering, loss of income, but also a long term health package to protect us against long term health issues that could affect us in the future.

thankyou for considering my submission, regards Suellen Telford