

Italy seeking women with French breast implants

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Dr. Maurice Mimoun, a plastic surgeon at the St Louis hospital, holds silicone gel breast implants made by French company Poly Implant Prothese, or PIP, that he removed from a patient because of concerns that they are unsafe, Paris, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2011. French health authorities are considering whether to suggest that an estimated 30,000 women in France get their breast implants removed, amid warnings by leading doctors about risks of rupture and possible cancer risks. (AP Photo/Michel Euler)

(AP) -- Italy's health ministry on Thursday asked hospitals to track down women who received silicone breast implants made by a suspect French company due to concerns the implants may be unsafe.

The ministry's health council also said the national health system would

pay to have the Poly Implant Prothese, or PIP, implants removed if [medical conditions](#) required it, such as if they ruptured.

While saying there was no proof of any greater [cancer risk](#) among women with PIP implants, the council suggested that women with the implants contact their surgeons because there's a "greater probability of rupture and [inflammatory reaction](#)."

The council met Thursday in an emergency session on the eve of an expected decision by French [health authorities](#) over whether to recommend mass surgery for thousands of women who received PIP implants.

French investigators say the implants were made with cheap industrial silicone, not medical grade silicone, and that more than 1,000 women in France have had one or two implants burst. In addition, there have been eight cases of cancer among women with the implants, including one who died in November.

Italy's [health ministry](#) estimates that about 4,000-4,300 PIP devices have been implanted in women in Italy. From 2005 to today, some 24 ruptures have been reported.

Italy recalled the implants April 1, 2010, a day after French health authorities reported that they had suspended the sale, distribution and exportation of PIP implants after discovering that the vast majority were made with industrial silicone.

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