Pain while walking is the most common symptom experienced by women suffering complications following a mesh implant surgery, a new survey has revealed.

Sling The Mesh asked its 8,600 members how their life had been impacted since having a mesh implant. The top five most common complications experienced were painful to walk, urinary urgency, painful to sit, severe fatigue and IBS bloating.

These were followed by chronic hip and leg pain, discomfort during sex, brain fog, urinary frequency and anxiety.

Respondents were asked to indicate, from a list, any symptoms they had which were new onset or had worsened since mesh surgery. They were also invited to add any symptom not already stated which they had which developed soon after mesh surgery, or which they associated with it.

Symptoms were then grouped into categories, with the number of respondents listed. Symptoms with under 35 respondents were excluded.

The survey reveals that serious health problems include depression and suicidal thoughts, constant urinary tract infections, sepsis and a host of auto immune diseases like arthritis and painful joints, Lichens Schleroiss and Sjorgens Syndrome. High on the list is fibromyalgia, numb legs and feet, severe dry eye, nerve damage in the groin and constipation.

There were almost 300 women who reported mesh slicing into their vagina and 148 who said their mesh had cut into their bladder, urethra or bowel.

**MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS SUFFERED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pain on walking</td>
<td>934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urinary Urgency</td>
<td>919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain on sitting</td>
<td>856</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Severe fatigue 811
IBS symptoms – bloating 798
Chronic or recurring hip pain 781
Chronic or recurring leg pain 741
Discomfort during sex 738
Brain Fog 720
Urinary frequency 685
Anxiety 629
Pain during sex 622
Urinary incontinence 615
Constipation 599

Categories

1. Pain

Pain on walking 934
Pain on sitting 856
Chronic or recurring hip pain 781
Chronic or recurring leg pain 741
Chronic or recurring lower back pain 530
Chronic or recurring pelvic pain or abdominal pain 528
Chronic or recurring buttock pain 524
Chronic or recurring pelvic pain 417
Sharp pain between pubic bone and leg 400
Hand pain 327
Burning pain 324
Unable to sit on hard seats without pain 208
Had my mesh removed but still in pain due to nerve damage 191
Sharp pain in mesh area reaching up eg to a high shelf etc 179
Severe back pain, Protacks embedded into S spine 173
Pain when bending down 154
2. **Sexual function**

Discomfort during sex 738  
Pain during sex 622  
Inability to have sex due to pain 506  
Pain on orgasm 56  

3. **Psychological -anxiety, depression etc.**

Brain Fog 720  
Anxiety 629  
Depression (new onset or worsened since surgery) 483  
Suicide ideation (new onset since surgery) 119
4. **Fatigue related**

Severe fatigue 811
Fatigue and nausea through lack of sleep 507

5. **Neurological/numbness**

Nerve damage in groin area 482
Numbness in legs and feet 466
Lifting legs up feeling heavy up stairs 417
Daily headache 248
Nerve pain on removal area when walk or stand throbs and burns also affects sleeping 241
Migraines 156
Leg collapses and falls 171
Labia nerve damage where instruments went during op 35
6. **Inflammatory or immune system related**

Inflammation 374
Severe Dry Eye 373
Arthritis weak joints 328
Fibromyalgia (note this is not considered to be an autoimmune disorder) 270
Other Autoimmune Disease (diagnosed) 187
Sinus problems, dry mouth 156
Generalised gland swelling and pain with no other cause found so assumed to be mesh reaction (neck, armpits, groin) 89
Lichens Schlerosis 44
Sjogren’s Syndrome 39

7. **Functional e.g. urinary or bowel symptoms**

Urinary Urgency 919
IBS symptoms – bloating 798
Urinary frequency 685
Urinary incontinence 615
Constipation 599
Repeated Urinary Tract Infections 516
Difficulty emptying bowel 405
Difficulty urinating 294
New or worsened faecal incontinence 213
Still wear thick incontinence pads - can't go... 173
No message to say I need to urinate and then is urgent and painful 165
Chronic wind, on walking, getting up from sitting down. 152
Bladder spasms 134
Blood in urine 126
Inability to urinate 88
Self-catheterise after mesh inserted 81
8. **Skin problems**

Skin sensitivity, like crawling on skin  
Unexplained rashes  
Red or Purple spots like mini blood blisters  
Rosacea  
Other new onset skin condition  
Skin sores in vulva  
Soreness inside ears  
Psoriasis  
Hives  
Shingles  
Sores in groin

9. **Severe adverse events e.g. erosion**

Mesh erosion into vagina  
Erosion into other organs, including bladder, urethra or bowel  
Vaginal Bleeding
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mesh infection or abscess</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urethral erosion</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sepsis</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fistula formation</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernias following mesh removal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anemic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Excessive sweating, night sweats</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weight gain</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair loss or thinning of hair.</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prolapse return, bladder/bowel/uterus</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gum disease mouth ulcers</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinnitus</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buzzing in pelvis and other areas of body (like vibrations)</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various vitamin deficiency’s</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty Swallowing</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continual Thrush</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of tape all the time - feels too tight</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart problems</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy periods</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaemic</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
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**Symptom list, non-categorised, from most to least frequent. Symptoms with under 35 respondents were excluded**

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Fatigue and nausea through lack of sleep
Inability to have sex due to pain
Depression (new onset or worsened since surgery)
Nerve damage in groin area
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Had my mesh removed but still in pain due to nerve damage
Other Autoimmune Disease (diagnosed)
High blood pressure
Buzzing in pelvis and other areas of body (like vibrations)
Sharp pain in mesh area reaching up e.g. to a high shelf etc
Severe back pain, Protacks embedded into S spine.
Still wear thick incontinence pads - can’t go without them despite op
Leg collapses and falls
No message to say I need to urinate and then is urgent and painful
Migraines
Sinus problems dry mouth
Pain when bending down
Chronic wind, on walking, getting up from sitting down.
Erosion into other organs, including bladder, urethra or bowel
Various vitamin deficiency’s
Difficulty driving due to pain in left leg, pain in pubic area & leg when pressing down on clutch
Has a ping snapping sensation in groin, staggers for a few minutes then can walk
Difficulty Swallowing
Bladder spasms
Blood in urine
Vaginal Bleeding
Suicide ideation (new onset since surgery)
Continual Thrush
Awareness of tape all the time - feels too tight
Red or Purple spots like mini blood blisters
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**Footnote:** It was not possible to calculate the total number of respondents from the Facebook survey. However, it can be seen that 934 responded to the most common symptom of pan when walking.