

What do amputees want to know as they consider Osseointegration?

Background

Osseointegration (OI) is a surgical procedure directly connecting living bone to a load-bearing implant. Developed by **Per-Ingvar Brånemark** at the University of Gothenburg, it utilizes titanium to integrate with bone, revolutionizing prosthetics in the 1960s.

Benefits:

- Improved mobility for those struggling with socket prostheses
- Greater stability
- Enhanced osseoperception

Risks:

- Soft tissue issues (stoma infections, irritation)
- Mechanical failures
- Bone fractures

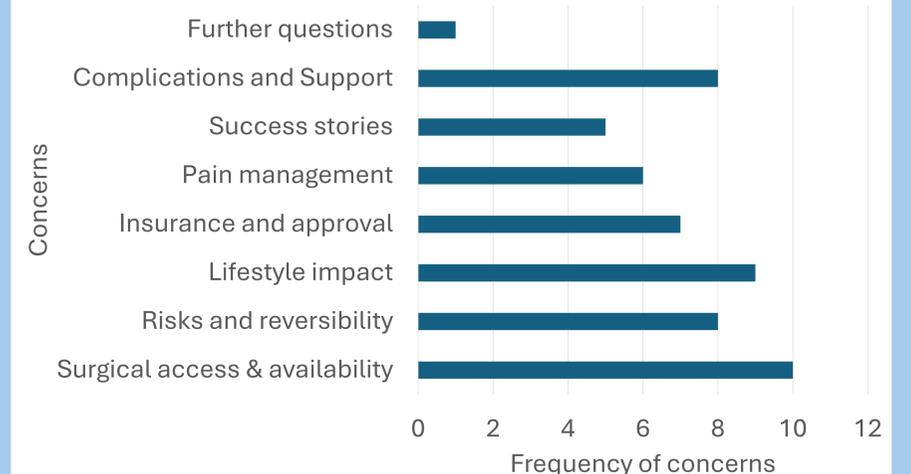
Purpose

- **Research Initiative:** Dr. Woodend and Dr. Hallaran with the Amputee Coalition of Canada, are developing a funding proposal to create a decision support tool for individuals with limb loss considering osseointegration.
- **Information-Seeking Behaviour:** Many individuals considering osseointegration seek information and share experiences through Facebook groups dedicated to the procedure.
- **Research Need:** Understanding the types of questions individuals with limb loss ask and the responses they receive within these online communities will inform the development of the decision support tool.
- **Objective:** The aim of this research is to gather insights from online discussions to enhance patient-centered resources and support evidence-based decision-making for those considering osseointegration.

Methodology

- Conduct a search of Facebook support groups focused on osseointegration and general amputee support.
- Extract, collate, and analyze discussions to identify key themes and common concerns.
- Administer **surveys** and conduct **interviews** with individuals considering osseointegration within these groups.
- Gather insights on the information amputees seek, available resources, and perceived support in their decision-making process.

General trends of concerns and the frequency of concern (gathered from 54 responses)



Results

Gathered from OI groups on Facebook and Interviews:

- **Access & Availability:** Many must travel for surgery and seek clarity on regional options.
- **Risks & Reversibility:** Some revert to socket prostheses due to infection or pain, though rarely.
- **Lifestyle Impact:** Concerns include swimming safety, physical activity, and stoma protection.
- **Insurance & Approval:** Processes vary, with some facing delays and exemption requirements.
- **Success Stories:** Patients report improved mobility and returning to active lifestyles.
- **Complications & Support:** Infection management is a key concern, with patients relying on medical teams and peer networks for guidance.
- **Interviews:** Further questions regarding the probability of a successful OI procedure, weight and age eligibility, and whether medical insurance would cover OI.

Conclusion

- Uncertainty about procedure locations and travel needs.
- Concerns about risks like infection and the potential need to revert to socket prostheses.
- Questions about the impact on daily activities, exercise, and stoma care.
- Challenges with insurance coverage, approval timelines, and exemptions.
- Online support networks offering insights and emotional support.
- There is a need for clear, patient-centered resources to guide decision-making.

