



**»We Routinely Employ Tibial Cones  
for Revisions«**

Prof. Dr. med. Thorsten Gehrke on the advantages  
of the new TrabecuLink<sup>®</sup> Tibial Cones from LINK

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INTERVIEW

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An interview with Prof. Dr. med. Thorsten Gehrke about the advantages of the new TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones from LINK

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Prof. Dr. med. Thorsten Gehrke

**Professor Gehrke, the new TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones from LINK differ from other products. Could you explain what these are?**

TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones from LINK are made of a titanium alloy and have a very open-pored surface, with pores of different sizes. Studies show that titanium is extremely osseointegrative, more so even than tantalum.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the tibial cones currently on the market are rigid implants, whereas LINK® Tibial Cones are elastic.

**Why is that important?**

Tibial cones are used for restoring defects and for anti-rotational anchorage of knee implants. Elastic cones permit a degree of play, so they are able to adapt well to the bone. TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones can be integrated using the press-fit technique, and their elasticity means that they are constantly pressed against the bone. This mechanism further assists the process of osseointegration.

**When do you implant LINK® Tibial Cones?**

The main indication is revision knee reconstruction, primarily when loosening of the prosthesis is accompanied by a bone defect. In this situation, recementing may be problematic. The cones assist in restoration of the defect, providing support for the bone cement, and therefore allowing the prosthesis rotational stability. These three factors are decisive. Tibial cones are indispensable in modern knee revision surgery.

**You were involved in the development of LINK Tibial Cones. How did the idea come about?**

The idea materialized because we need a certain degree of rotational stability when, for example, we implant prostheses with a stem extension because otherwise they would rotate in their cement mantle and quickly become loose. We also found that substantial defects restored

with allograft do not always function correctly. The reason for this is that the bone used in restoration does not always integrate optimally into the patient's autochthonous bone due to a lack of pressure.

**TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones are specially designed for use with the LINK® Endo-Model®. Why is that?**

Previously, we often experienced problems because of size differences when we implanted other cones in combination with the LINK® Endo-Model® Rotational Knee Prosthesis. Consequently, we designed the TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones specifically for use with the LINK® Endo-Model®.

**What are the advantages of TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones, compared to sleeves?**

The distinction between sleeves and cones is not clearly defined. The purpose of both is essentially the same: namely, to restore a bone defect and provide security against rotation. Cones are employed more in the proximal region of the tibia, whereas sleeves are often located somewhat deeper and are more a means of fixation.



## INTERVIEW

**Prof. Dr. med. Thorsten Gehrke** is Medical Director and Head of Department for joint replacement at the Helios ENDO-Klinik in Hamburg, Germany.



»The new Tibial Cones from LINK are elastic, which makes them easy to adapt to the bone.«

Prof. Dr. med. Thorsten Gehrke

**How would you assess TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones with regard to periprosthetic infections?**

In our experience, TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones have an anti-infectious effect. We do not know why this is. We employ LINK® Tibial Cones for single-stage revisions in periprosthetic infections, and it works very well.

**How easy is it to implant Tibial Cones?**

The implantation instruments are extremely simple to use and manipulate. This means less experienced surgeons have no difficulty in implanting these cones.

**How much demand is there for the new LINK® Tibial Cones, in your opinion?**

In my view, the demand is very high. There are figures which indicate an increase of around 600 percent in revision knee arthroplasties performed in the USA between 2010 and 2030. I believe that cones in general can be used in

50 percent of all knee revisions.

**How many TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones have you implanted up to now?**

TrabecuLink® Tibial Cones are rated highly by our colleagues, and we now implant them routinely. Up to now, we have implanted over 200 cones, and the outcomes have been excellent. So far not a single cone has become loose.

**Professor Gehrke, many thanks for giving us this interview.**

<sup>1</sup> Steinemann SG: Compatibility of Titanium in Soft and Hard Tissue – The Ultimate is Osseointegration; Materials for Medical Engineering, WILEY-VCH, Volume 2, Page 199-203.