

NO LIMITS

The magazine for young people with arthritis

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Is Prince trying to be hip again?

One of the music industry's more colourful characters, **Prince**, has had to entertain the idea of having a hip replacement operation to prevent further damage from his osteoarthritis. **Juliet Stephens** investigates...

At only 5ft 2in, the itty bitty pop guru has spent years strutting his stuff in high heels. Unfortunately for Prince, all that clipping about and performing energetic dance routines on stage has meant that he has become a victim of fashion. Now the 47-year-old mini maestro of pop has been told that he needs to have a full hip replacement if he wants to keep dancing.

Hugely successful, with a career spanning over 30 years, Prince has recorded some of the biggest hits of the 20th century, including *When Doves Cry*, *Purple Rain*, *Alphabet Street*, and that Millennium classic, *1999*. He has also written and produced countless hits for other artists, although was scathing about rival Michael Jackson's multi-platinum selling album, *Bad*, saying: 'It was only called *Bad* because there wasn't enough room on the sleeve for "Pathetic".'

A source told the American magazine, the *National Enquirer*: 'Over the years he has battered his body so much, and his joints, especially his hips, are causing him a lot of discomfort. He used to wear high-heeled boots every day, and doctors have told him that may have contributed to his condition.'

It is not uncommon for dancers to

develop osteoarthritis, particularly in the hips, as a result of misusing a joint. Prince is famed for his particularly sexy dance routines, but these have taken their toll on his body.

'I wear heels because the women like them'

Prince is a Jehovah's Witness – he even goes door-to-door recruiting people to join the religion. But his beliefs have proved something of an obstacle. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Bible prohibits blood transfusions, a stance which has been a source of great controversy as some believers have died as a result of refusing to accept transfusions. Prince has delayed having surgery, preferring to take anti-inflammatory drugs instead to help him cope with the condition.



Prince was the star turn at this year's BRIT awards

Getty images

However, an article in *The Watchtower* (the official communication of the Jehovah's Witnesses) in 1995 reported that the Jehovah's Witnesses had relaxed the view on accepting autologous blood transfusions, in which the patient's own blood is re-infused, as opposed to using donor blood. Maybe this could be the way for Prince to go?

Prince is not your average musician. He was a notorious ladies man, once quoted as saying: 'People say I'm wearing heels because I'm short. I wear heels because the women like them.' But the pain, Princey boy, the pain? ■