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(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

Endosseous implant to be applied to a human or animal bone, said implant having a surface made from a selected metal or a selected metal alloy or a ceramic, whereby said metal resp. metal alloy is selected from chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steels or an alloy thereof, said surface having a smooth or rough texture, characterized in that said surface has been treated with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable organic compound carrying at least one phosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof preferably a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester or amid thereof and method for producing said implant.

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(54) Title: ENDOSSEOUS IMPLANT

(57) Abstract: Endosseous implant to be applied to a human or animal bone, said implant having a surface made from a selected metal or a selected metal alloy or a ceramic, whereby said metal resp. metal alloy is selected from chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steels or an alloy thereof, said surface having a smooth or rough texture, characterized in that said surface has been treated with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable organic compound carrying at least one phosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof preferably a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester or amid thereof and method for producing said implant.



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Endosseous Implant

The present invention relates to a selected metallic or selected ceramic endosseous implant to be applied to a human or animal bone, said implant having a smooth or rough surface texture, and wherein said surface has been treated with at
5 least one selected organic compound carrying at least one phosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof.

Selected metallic surfaces within the meaning of the present invention are made from metals such as chromium, niobium,
10 tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steels or alloys thereof. Excluded are metallic titanium and metallic titanium alloy surfaces.

Ceramic surfaces within the meaning of the present invention are preferably made from a metal oxide, metal carbide, metal
15 nitride, metal oxynitride, metal carbonitride and/or metal oxycarbide. Examples of such metal oxides, carbides, nitrides, oxynitrides, carbonitride or oxycarbides are those of chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steels or alloys
20 thereof, included also titanium carbide, titanium nitride, titanium oxynitride, titanium carbonitride and/or titanium oxycarbide.

Implants according to the present invention may be used as prostheses in medicine, more specifically in orthopaedics,
25 for replacing or strengthening broken or diseased bones, and in dentistry, for anchoring artificial teeth and for anchoring of bone anchored hearing prosthesis. It has been shown that surfaces modified according to the present invention surprisingly enhance the bone bonding strength.

30 Implants which are used as prostheses in medicine for replacing or strengthening broken or diseased bones or as artificial teeth are known. These implants must be made of a non-corrosive material and must be compatible with the surrounding tissue without producing immunologic reactions

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effecting rejection by the body. In the following the terms "surface" or "contact surface" refer to the defined metallic or ceramic implant surface not yet treated according to the present invention and the term "modified surface" to said surface treated according to the present invention.

It is known that implanting devices in the form of screws, plates, nails, pins, and specially formed parts into the skeletal structure of humans and animals as artificial prosthetic is a means for permanent replacement of missing structural parts or as permanent anchoring devices. An excellent "osseointegration" is required for those situations where the implanted device should remain permanently adhered to the contacting bone surface.

It is known to use selected metals and selected ceramic materials for implants. When carefully produced, the implant with its surface exhibits biocompatibility in the sense that it remains passive for bone regeneration and does not per se induce adverse reactions such as inflammation or soft tissue generation or encapsulation. The interface obtained between the implant and the bone tissue normally consists of a protein layer of about 100 nm to 1 μ m thickness preventing the bone tissue from being in direct molecular contact with the implant.

The actual state of the art for endosseous implants is based on different approaches, for example (i) the creation of a suitable roughness of the implant surface giving a mechanical interlocking between bone and implant and/or (ii) coating the surface of the implant, e.g. with an artificial hydroxyapatite for improving the healing process and the bone-implant intimate contact.

It is known that a high surface roughness increases the mechanical stability of the implant in the bone tissue. Mechanical surface treatment significantly alters the topography, while the surface chemistry remains substantially unchanged. The disadvantages of an implant with a high

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surface roughness are that a purely mechanical anchoring is very sensible to micromotions which may lead to a deterioration of the mechanical anchorage and that the osseointegration time of the implant is relatively long.

5 Coating the surface of the implant with an artificial hydroxyapatite decreases the osseointegration time. However, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to produce hydroxyapatite coatings with a long term stability on load bearing implants. The interface between the coating
10 and the implant is often disrupted or the coatings are flaked off.

 It has now been found that if the surface of an endosseous implant which has a selected metallic or ceramic surface as defined herein is treated with at least one
15 organic compound carrying at least one phosphonic acid group $[-P(O)(OH)_2]$ or a derivative thereof, as defined herein below, said surface shows a surprisingly improved bone bonding strength and a surprisingly shortened osseointegration time compared to the non treated surface
20 and does not have the disadvantages as known for surfaces having a hydroxyapatite coating.

 The present invention specifically refers to an endosseous implant to be applied to a human or animal bone, said implant having a surface made from a selected metal or
25 a selected metal alloy or a ceramic, whereby said metal resp. metal alloy is selected from chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steels or an alloy thereof, said surface having a smooth or rough texture, characterized in that said surface
30 has been treated with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable organic compound carrying at least one phosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof, which is preferably a

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pharmaceutically acceptable ester or amide or a salt thereof.

According to one aspect of the present invention, there is provided an endosseous implant for application to a human or animal bone, said implant having a surface made from a metal, a metal alloy or a ceramic, wherein the metal is chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steel, and wherein the alloy comprises two or more metals selected from the group consisting of chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel and stainless steel, wherein said surface has a layer formed thereon of at least one pharmaceutically acceptable organic compound carrying at least one phosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof, which is a pharmaceutically acceptable ester, amide or salt thereof, corresponding to formula (I):



wherein A means A_1 or A_2 , and A_1 is a residue of a linear, branched or cyclic, saturated or unsaturated, hydrocarbon residue with n carbon atoms, wherein said residue is unsubstituted or substituted by carboxyl, wherein n is a number from 1 to 70, and p is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6; A_2 is a residue of an amino acid or of a sequence of amino acids respectively of a protein or of a polypeptide; or a residue of a specific drug molecule, wherein each residue A_2 carries p phosphonic acid groups, and p is 1 to 6, when A_2 is a residue of an amino acid, of a sequence of amino acids, of a protein or of a polypeptide; or p is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, when A_2 is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group.

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According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein said A_1 residue is further interrupted by one or more oxygen or sulphur or nitrogen atoms, carrying p
5 phosphonic acid groups, or a combination thereof.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein when A_2 is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group, A_2 is
10 defined as for A_1 .

According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the surface of the implant is made of a ceramic selected from the group consisting of oxide
15 surfaces, carbide surfaces, nitride surfaces, oxynitride surfaces, carbonitride surfaces or oxycarbide surfaces of chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steels and alloys thereof.

According to yet another aspect of the present
20 invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the surface of the implant is made of titanium carbide, titanium nitride, titanium oxynitride, titanium carbonitride, titanium oxycarbide, or a combination thereof.

25 According to a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the surface of the implant is made from a metal oxide or an apatite material.

According to yet a further aspect of the present
30 invention, there is provided the implant as described

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herein, wherein the surface of the implant is made of a glass material.

According to still a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described
5 herein, wherein

n in residue A_1 is a number from 1 to 40, and

p in formula (I) is 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5; or

p is 1, 2, 3 or 4, when A_2 is a residue of an amino acid or of a sequence of amino acids, of a protein or of a
10 polypeptide; or

p is 1, 2 or 3, when A_2 is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described
15 herein, wherein when A_2 is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group, A_2 is defined as for A_1 .

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described
20 herein, wherein A has a meaning of A_1 , and: (a) when n is 1, p is 2 and A is $-CH_2-$; (b) when n is 1, p is 3 or 4; (c) when n is 2 to 10, p is 2, provided each phosphonic acid group or phosphonic acid ester group is bound to a different carbon atom within the same molecule; (d) when n is 2 to 10, p
25 is 3, 4, 5 or 6; (e) when n is 11 to 70, p is 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein A has a meaning of A_2 , and p is 1 or 3-6, for

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the case that A_2 is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein when A_2 is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group, A_2 is defined as for A_1 .

According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein A_1 is a saturated hydrocarbon residue of the formula $-(C_nH_{2n+2-p})-$, wherein n means 1 to 70.

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the compound of formula (I) is an alkali salt.

According to a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the compound of formula (I) is selected from the group consisting of a saturated monophosphonic acid, a saturated polyphosphonic acid, an unsaturated monophosphonic acid and an unsaturated polyphosphonic acid.

According to yet a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable ester is the isopropyl phosphonate or ethyl phosphonate ester.

According to still a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the ester is selected from the group consisting of tetra isopropyl methylenediphosphonate, hexaethyl ethane-1,1,2-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl butane-

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1,1,4-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl hexane-2,2,6-triphosphonate, octaisopropyl propane-1,1,3,3-tetrphosphonate, octaisopropyl heptane-1,4,4,7-tetrphosphonate, and octaisopropyl nonane-1,5,5,9-tetrphosphonate.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the compound of formula (I) represents a Transforming Growth Factor beta (TGF- β) as defined by the members of the superfamily of growth factors, selected from the group consisting of TGF- β 1, TGF- β 2, TGF- β 3, TGF- β 4, and TGF- β 5, wherein in each member the peptide chain has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof.

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the compound of formula (I) represents a Bone Morphogenic Protein (BMP), selected from the group consisting of BMP-2 (BMP-2a), BMP-3, BMP-4, BMP-2b, BMP-5, BMP-6, BMP-7, OP-1, BMP-8, OP-2, BMP-9, BMP-10, BMP-11, BMP-12, and BMP-13, wherein the peptide chain has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the compound of formula (I) is selected from the group consisting of 2-amino-4,4-bis-(diethoxy-phosphoryl)-butyric acid, 2-amino-5-(diethoxy-phosphoryl)-pentanoic acid, 2-amino-4-phosphonobutyric acid, and a combination thereof.

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According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the compound of formula (I) is selected from one of the principal twenty amino acids, wherein the amino
5 acid has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the compound of formula (I) is a RGD-
10 containing peptide, selected from the group consisting of a RGDS-peptide, a GRGDS-peptide, a RGDV-peptide, a RGDE-peptide, a RGDT-peptide, and a combination thereof, which has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof.

15 According to yet another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein, wherein the compound of formula (I) is selected from the group consisting of 1-hydroxy-3-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-propylidene diphosphonic acid, cycloheptylamino-methylene
20 diphosphonic acid, 1-hydroxy-2-imidazo-(1,2-a)-pyridin-3-yl-ethylidene diphosphonic acid, 1-hydroxy-2-(3-pyridinyl)-ethylidene diphosphonic acid, (4-chlorophenyl)thio-methylene diphosphonic acid and 1-hydroxy-2-(1H-imidazole-1-yl)ethylidene diphosphonic acid.

25 According to a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided the implant as described herein in the form of screw, plate, nail, or pin.

According to yet a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a process for producing the
30 implant as described herein, which comprises treating said surface with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable

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organic compound of formula (I) or a salt or ester or an amide thereof, to form said layer thereon.

According to still a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided an air tight plastic or
5 metallic packaging material comprising the implant a s described herein.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the air tight plastic or metallic packaging material as described herein, which is
10 evacuated or filled with an inert gas or an inert liquid.

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the packaging material as described herein, wherein said packaging material is filled with pure water containing an inorganic salt, or a compound
15 of formula (I), a salt or ester thereof, or a combination thereof.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the packaging material as described herein, wherein the concentration of inorganic
20 salt, a compound of formula (I) or a salt or ester thereof is from about 1.0×10^{-5} mol/10 ml to 5×10^{-2} mol/10 ml of the water.

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a compound of formula (I) or
25 salt or ester thereof as described herein, wherein p is 3 to 6, and n is 4 to 70.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided the compound as described herein, selected from the group consisting of butane-1,1,4-
30 triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonic acid,

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pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonic acid, hexane-2,2,6-triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5,5-tetrakisphosphonic acid, heptane-1,4,4,7-tetrakisphosphonic acid, nonane-1,5,5,9-tetrakisphosphonic acid, a salt thereof, an ester thereof and an amide thereof.

5 The present invention further refers to a process for producing the implant according to the present invention, which is characterized in that said surface is treated with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable organic compound carrying at least one phosphonic acid group
10 or a derivative thereof preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof.

 According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a process for producing the implant as described herein, which comprises treating said
15 surface with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable organic compound of formula (I) or a salt or ester or an amide thereof, to form said layer thereon.

 The metallic surface of the endosseous implant to be treated according to the present invention is made from
20 chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steels or an alloy thereof. Such metals and metal alloys for making implants are described for example in Breme et al., Metals as biomaterials, pp. 1-71 (1998), John Wiley & Sons Ltd, Chichester, England;
25 J.B. Park and R.S. Lakes, Biomaterials, An Introduction (1992), 2nd Edition, Plenum Press, New York pp. 79-115 and 293-354; R. Schmidt, Comportement des matériaux dans les milieux biologiques, Applications en médecine et biotechnologie, Vol. 7 (1999) pp. 294-343, Presses
30 polytechniques et universitaires romandes, Lausanne, Switzerland.

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Alternatively, the surface of the endosseous implant to be treated according to the present invention may be made of a ceramic. Such ceramic surfaces are for example metallic surfaces which have been treated thermally or
5 chemically or treated with a plasma or another appropriate method. Such treatments are known and have been described in the literature, such as oxide surfaces, carbide surfaces, nitride surfaces, oxynitride surfaces, carbonitride surfaces or oxycarbide surfaces, for example those of chromium,
10 niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel, stainless steels or alloys thereof. Included are titanium carbide, titanium nitride, titanium oxynitride, titanium carbonitride and/or titanium oxycarbide. Excluded from the present invention are surfaces made from titanium
15 oxide.

Such surfaces and their production is known and is described for example in H. Bender et al., Surf. Interface Anal. 14 (1989) pp. 337fs. Preferred ceramic surfaces which are made from metal oxides, are aluminium oxide or zirconium
20 oxide or

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silicon oxide, preferably from apatites, preferably hydroxyapatite or fluoroapatite, or apatite like materials, preferably tricalciumphosphate, or brushite type layers such as are described for example in Breme et al., Metals as
 5 biomaterials, pp. 219-264 (1998), ed. J.A. Helsen et al., John Wiley & Sons Ltd, Chichester, England; or J.B. Park and R.S. Lakes, Biomaterials, An Introduction (1992), 2nd Edition, Plenum Press, New York, pp. 117-140 and 169-183; or
 10 R. Schmidt, Comportement des matériaux dans les milieux biologiques, Applications en médecine et biotechnologie, Vol. 7 (1999), pp. 306-314, Presses polytechniques et universitaires romandes, Lausanne, Switzerland).

Other ceramic surfaces which may be used within the scope of the present invention may be glass like surfaces made for
 15 example from silicate glass, or boron silica glass, or bioglass such as described for example in R. Schmidt, Comportement des matériaux dans les milieux biologiques. Applications en médecine et biotechnologie, Vol. 7 (1999), pp. 306-314, Presses polytechniques et universitaires
 20 romandes, Lausanne, Switzerland as well as in other literature references cited above. the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Preferred organic compounds to be used within the scope of the present invention have at least one phosphonic acid group
 25 or a derivative thereof, which is preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof, resp. preferred implants have a surface which has been treated with at least one organic compound, or a mixture of such compounds, corresponding to the general formula (I):



or a pharmaceutically acceptable derivative thereof, which is preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof, wherein A means A₁ or A₂, and

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A₁ is a residue of a linear, branched or cyclic, saturated or unsaturated, hydrocarbon residue with n carbon atoms, whereby said residue may be substituted by hydroxyl and/or carboxyl and optionally further interrupted by one or more
5 oxygen and/or sulphur and/or nitrogen atoms, carrying p phosphonic acid groups, wherein

n is a number from 1 to 70, preferably 1 to 40, preferably 1 to 22, and

p is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, preferably 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5,
10 preferably 1, 2, 3 or 4; or

or A means A₂ and A₂ is a residue of an amino acid or of a sequence of amino acids resp. of a protein or of a polypeptide, preferably a residue of the superfamily of Transforming Growth Factor beta (TGF- β); or a residue of a
15 specific drug molecule, wherein each residue A₂ carries p phosphonic acid groups, and

p is 1 to 6, preferably 1, 2, 3 or 4, preferably 1, 2, or 3, when A₂ is a residue of an amino acid or of a sequence of amino acids resp. of a protein or of a polypeptide; or

20 p is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, preferably 1, 2 or 3, and preferably 1, when A₂ is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group, optionally falling under the definition given for A₁.

Compounds (i) and (ii) of the general formula (I) are
25 preferred:

(i) If A has a meaning of A₁, then: when n is 1 and p is 2: A is preferably -CH₂-; or when n is 1: p is preferably 3 or 4, preferably 3; or when n is 2 to 10: p is preferably 2, provided each phosphonic acid group or phosphonic acid ester
30 group or phosphonic acid amide group is bound to a different carbon atom within the same molecule; or when n is 2 to 10: p is preferably 3, 4, 5 or 6, preferably 3, 4 or 5, preferably

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3 or 4; or when n is 11 to 70: p is preferably 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, preferably 2, 3, 4 or 5, preferably 2, 3 or 4.

(ii) If A has the meaning of A_2 , then: p is preferably 1 or 3-6, preferably 1, for the case that A_2 is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group, optionally falling under the definition given for A_1 .

It is assumed that the phosphonate compounds as specified herein, especially as acids or salts, form a covalent bond with the surface of the implant thereby improving the osseointegration properties of said surface to a remarkable and unexpected extent. The present invention however is not bound to this explanation.

A_1 preferably is a saturated hydrocarbon residue of the formula $-(C_nH_{2n+2-p})-$, wherein n means 1 to 70, preferably 1 to 40, preferably 1 to 22. Preferred is the free acid or the salt form of the compound of formula (I), preferably where the pharmaceutically acceptable salt is an alkali salt, preferably of sodium or potassium salt.

Examples of compounds of formula (I) wherein A_1 is a residue of a saturated hydrocarbon [e.g. an alkyl chain with 1 to 70 carbon atoms (C_1 - C_{70} -Alkyl)] are monophosphonic acids such as methanephosphonic acid, ethanephosphonic acid, propanephosphonic acid or polyphosphonic acids such as methylenediphosphonic acid, ethane-1,2-diphosphonic acid, propane-1,3-diphosphonic acid, ethane-1,1,2-triphosphonic acid, propane-1,1,3-triphosphonic acid, butane-1,1,4-triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonic acid, pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonic acid, hexane-2,2,6-triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5,5-tetraphosphonic acid, heptane-1,4,4,7-tetraphosphonic acid, propane-1,1,3,3-tetraphosphonic acid, or nonane-1,5,5,9-tetraphosphonic acid.

Examples of compounds of formula (I) wherein A_1 is a residue of an unsaturated hydrocarbon are unsaturated monophosphonic acids and polyphosphonic acids such as those given in H.

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Fleisch, Bisphosphonates in bone disease, from the laboratory to the patient 2000, 4rd edition, The Parthenon Publishing Group, p.31-33.

- 5 If the pharmaceutically acceptable ester is used, the isopropyl phosphonate or ethyl phosphonate esters, preferably of the acids given in the two previous chapters, are preferred. Further examples of such esters are: tetra isopropyl methylenediphosphonate, hexaethyl ethane-1,1,2-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl butane-1,1,4-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl hexane-2,2,6-triphosphonate, octaisopropyl propane-1,1,3,3-tetrachosphonate, octaisopropyl heptane-1,4,4,7-tetrachosphonate, octaisopropyl nonane-1,5,5,9-tetrachosphonate.

- Examples of compounds of formula (I) wherein A_2 is a residue of a protein resp. polypeptide are compounds in the form of a Transforming Growth Factor beta (TGF- β) in which are included the all members of the superfamily of growth factors and particularly the TGF- β 1, TGF- β 2, TGF- β 3, TGF- β 4, and TGF- β 5 as described for example in A.B. Roberts, M.B. Sporn, Handbook of Experimental Pharmacology, 95 (1990) pp. 419-472 or D.M. Kingsley, Genes and Development 8 (1994) p. 133-146, and references therein, where the peptide chain has been modified to contain an alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof. In this sense the compound of formula (I) represents a Transforming Growth Factor beta (TGF- β) as defined by the members of the superfamily of growth factors, preferably the TGF- β 1, TGF- β 2, TGF- β 3, TGF- β 4, and TGF- β 5, wherein each time the peptide chain has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof.

- Examples of compounds of formula (I) wherein A is a residue of a Bone Morphogenic Protein (BMP) (being a subfamily to the

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TGF family) are compounds e.g., the BMP-2 (BMP-2a), BMP-3, BMP-4 (BMP-2b), BMP-5, BMP-6, BMP-7 (OP-1), BMP-8 (OP-2), BMP-9, BMP-10, BMP-11, BMP-12, BMP-13, as found for example in J.M. Wozney et. al., Science 242 (1988) 1528-1534; A.J. Celeste et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 87 (1990) 9843-9847; E. Özkaynak et al., J. Biol. Chem. 267 (1992) 25220-25227 ; Takao et al., Biochem. Biophys. Res. Com. 219 (1996) 656-662 ; WO 93/00432 ; WO 94/26893 ; WO 94/26892 ; WO 95/16035 and references therein, where the peptide chain has been modified to contain an alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof. In this sense the compound of formula (I) represents a Bone Morphogenic Protein (BMP), preferably the BMP-2 (BMP-2a), BMP-3, BMP-4 (BMP-2b), BMP-5, BMP-6, BMP-7 (OP-1), BMP-8 (OP-2), BMP-9, BMP-10, BMP-11, BMP-12, BMP-13, wherein the peptide chain has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof.

Examples of compounds of formula (I) wherein A₂ is a residue of an amino acid are 2-amino-4,4-bis-(diethoxy-phosphoryl)-butyric acid as described for example in O. Fabulet et al., Phosphorus, Sulphur Silicon and Related Elements, 101, 225-234 (1995); 2-amino-5-(diethoxy-phosphoryl)-pentanoic acid as described for example in I.G. Andronova et al., Russ. J. Gen. Chem. 66, 1068-1071 (1996); 2-amino-4-phosphonobutyric acid as described for example in X.Y. Jiao et al., Synth. Commun. 22, 1179-1186 (1992) and references therein. Further examples are all the principal twenty amino acids as described for example in L. Stryer, Biochemistry, 3rd edition (1988), pp. 17-22, where the amino acid is modified in an analogous way with an alkylphosphonic acid group, preferably wherein the compound of formula (I) is one of the principal twenty amino acids, preferably arginine, glycine, aspartic acid, alanine, valine, proline, serine, threonine, cysteine or lysine, wherein the amino acid has been modified to contain at least

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one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided an endosseous implant as
5 described herein wherein the compound of formula I is 2-amino-4,4-bis-(diethoxy-phosphoryl)-butyric acid, 2-amino-5-(diethoxy-phosphoryl)-pentanoic acid, 2-amino-4-phosphonobutyric acid or a combination of two or more thereof.

10 Examples of compounds of formula (I) wherein A₂ is a residue of a peptide comprise but are not limited to RGD-containing peptides, RGDS-peptides, GRGDS-peptides, RGDV-peptides, RGDE-peptides, and/or RGDT-peptides. Such peptides are described for example in Y. Hirano, J. Biomed.
15 Materials Res., 25 (1991), pp. 1523-1534 or in WO 98/52619 and references therein. Included within the scope of the present invention are also similar peptides known to have specific biological activities such as cell attachment or cell attachment prevention, and which are prepared in
20 analogy with the peptides as mentioned above. In this sense the compound of formula (I) is a RGD-containing peptide, preferably a RGDS-peptide, a GRGDS-peptide, a RGDV-peptide, a RGDE-peptide, and/or a RGDT-peptide, which has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group
25 or a derivative thereof preferably an ester or an amide or a salt thereof.

Examples of compounds of formula (I) wherein A₂ is a residue of a specific drug molecule are 1-hydroxy-3-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-propylidene diphosphonic acid, or
30 cycloheptylamino-methylene diphosphonic acid, or 1-hydroxy-2-imidazo-(1,2-a)-pyridin-3-yl-ethylidene diphosphonic acid or 1-hydroxy-2-(3-pyridinyl)-ethylidene diphosphonic acid or

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(4-chlorophenyl)thio-methylene diphosphonic acid or
1-hydroxy-2-(1H-imidazole-1-yl)ethylidene diphosphonic acid
and related compounds as described for example in
H. Fleisch, Bisphosphonates in bone disease, from the
5 laboratory to the patient 2000, 4rd edition, The Parthenon
Publishing Group, pp. 31-33, and references therein.

Preferred compounds of formula (I) are those
containing a residue A₂ as defined above, preferably a
residue of an amino acid or of a sequence of amino acids
10 resp. of a protein or of

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a polypeptide, preferably a residue of the superfamily of Transforming Growth Factor beta (TGF- β), preferably a Bone Morphogenic Protein (BMP).

The following steps are recommended to be taken for producing the implant according to the present invention, i.e. for treating the surface of the implant with at least one compound of formula (I) or a mixture of these compounds. The implant is first cleaned in a cleaning bath for removing unwanted molecules resp. impurities from the surface. Preferably the implant is first treated with a degreasing agent, for example an organic solvent such as alcohol, chloroform, and another organic solvent and/or an inorganic detergent such as an aqueous alkaline solution based on sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide. Subsequently, the implant is carefully rinsed in pure water, preferably in distilled ultra-pure water, having preferably a conductivity resistance of at least 15 Mohm*cm. After cleaning and rinsing, the implant is dried with flowing nitrogen gas or flowing dry or hot air and stored under controlled conditions. Alternatively after degreasing the implant can be further treated in a glow-discharge plasma for cleaning the surface. The clean surface of the implant is then treated with at least one compound of formula (I) or an ester or a salt thereof, i.e. with at least one such compound or a mixture of such compounds. The compound or the mixture of said compounds is brought onto the surface of the implant by any suitable means, like brushing, spraying, dipping or evaporation, including glow-discharge plasma assisted vapour deposition. The phosphonic acid compound or the ester or the salt thereof is preferably dissolved in a polar solvent, so that a solution with a concentration of from about 1.0×10^{-5} mol/10 ml to 5×10^{-2} mol/10 ml, preferably from about 5×10^{-4} mol/10 ml to 2.0×10^{-2} mol/10 ml with reference to the weight of the solvent is obtained. Preferably the concentration is such that a partial or full (1 % to 100%, preferably 50 % to 100% of a) monomolecular layer is formed on the implant

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surface. The preferred solvent is pure distilled water. The implant is left in contact with the solution for a sufficiently long time, preferably for a few minutes up to a few hours. After that the implant is carefully rinsed with
5 pure water and packed with a plastic or metallic clean packaging material preferably into an air tight packaging which preferably is evacuated or filled with an inert gas such as nitrogen or an inert liquid such as pure water as defined herein above. Said pure water may contain inorganic
10 salts, preferably alkali salts, such as alkali chlorides, sulphates, phosphates, phosphonates, preferably the sodium and/or potassium salts, and/or compounds of the formula (I) or an ester or a salt thereof, which is preferably in a concentration of from about 1.0×10^{-5} mol/10 ml to 5×10^{-2}
15 mol/10 ml, preferably from about 5×10^{-4} mol/10 ml to 2.0×10^{-2} mol/10 ml of solvent, which preferably is distilled water.

Analytical investigations, e.g. X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy analysis (XPS) or NMR, have shown that on contacting the
20 phosphonic acid compound of formula (I) with the surface of the implant, immediate adsorption takes place. A strong bond is formed between the surface and the phosphonic acid compound so that a chemical surface modification is obtained. Several different polyphosphonic acids, salts, esters and
25 amides as mentioned herein above were synthesized. Dental implants produced with these compounds according to the present invention have shown excellent results.

Implants according to the present invention may be in the form of screws, plates, nails, pins, and specially formed
30 parts and may be used as prostheses in medicine, more specifically in orthopaedics, for replacing or strengthening broken or diseased bones, and in dentistry, for anchoring artificial teeth and for anchoring of bone anchored hearing prosthesis into the skeletal structure of humans and animals.
35 The surface area of the implant which is to be bound to the body tissue resp. bones, may have a smooth or rough surface

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texture. Such surface textures are known and can be obtained for example by treating the surface mechanically and/or with acids and/or electrolytically and/or with a glow-discharge plasma and/or plasma spraying and/or or by electro machining.

5 Such materials and processes have been described in different publications, for example in B.-O. Aronsson et al., J. Biomed. Mater. Res. 35 (1997), pp. 49f., the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

The compounds according to the general formula (I), wherein p
10 is 3 to 6, preferably 3 or 4, and n is 4 to 70, preferably 4 to 40, preferably 4 to 22, the salts or esters or amides thereof are new. Examples of such compounds are butane-1,1,4-triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonic acid, pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonic acid, hexane-2,2,6-triphosphonic
15 acid, pentane-1,1,5,5-tetrphosphonic acid, heptane-1,4,4,7-tetrphosphonic acid, or nonane-1,5,5,9-tetrphosphonic acid.

The compounds hexaisopropyl butane-1,1,4-triphosphonate and octaisopropyl heptane-1,4,4,7-tetrphosphonate, resp. a mixture of these compounds, are obtained in that an
20 alkalimetal, preferably sodium, tetra lower alkyl methylenediphosphonate, preferably tetraisopropyl methylenediphosphonate, is reacting with at least a stoichiometric amount of a dihalomethane, preferably dibromomethane, in the presence of an organic solvent having no active hydrogen atoms,
25 preferably dry hexane or benzene or toluene.

The reaction is preferably carried out at a temperature within the range of 30°C to 125°C, preferably 40°C to 110°C, until the reaction is completed, which generally is within a time period of 10 to 48 hours, preferably 18 to 36 hours.

30 To the reaction product is then added the purified product of triisopropylphosphite that has been reacted with diisopropyl-3-bromopropane. The obtained mixture of compounds can then be separated in a conventional manner, for example by column chromatography.

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In an analogous way, by reacting 1,4-dibromobutane in excess molar ratio in the range 1:6 to 1:0.5 with triisopropylphosphite, surprisingly the new compounds hexaisopropyl pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonate and octaisopropyl
5 nonane-1,5,5,9-tetraphosphonate are produced. Further, in an analogous way the hexaisopropyl pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonate and hexaisopropyl hexane-2,2,6-triphosphonate were obtained by reacting equal parts of tetraisopropylethane-1,1-diphosphonate with diisopropyl-3-bromopropylphosphonate.

10 The process is further characterised by that these products are hydrolysed to produce the analogous acids by refluxing them in molar excess of HCl for a time comprised within 1 to 12 hours, preferably 1 to 6 hours. The compounds are then preferably dried under vacuum over P_2O_5 .

15 The following Examples illustrate but do not limit the present invention.

Example 1 (Synthesis of alkane polyphosphonic acids)

Methylenediphosphonic acid was synthesized according to US-patent 3,400,176 and B.A. Arbusov, Pure Appl. Chem. 9 (1967),
20 pp. 307-353 and references therein. The compound was characterized by NMR (1H , ^{31}P , ^{13}C), mass spectroscopic elemental analysis and by its melting point. All these data are in accordance with the literature O.T. Quimby et al., Metalated methylenediphosphonate esters, preparation,
25 characterization and synthetic applications, J. of Organomet. Chem. 13, 199-207 (1968).

Propane-1,1,3,3-tetraphosphonic acid was synthesized from tetraisopropyl methylenediphosphonate. The tetraphosphonic acidic solution was concentrated under vacuum, dried over P_2O_5
30 under vacuum. The 1H , ^{31}P and ^{13}C NMR results (D_2O) are in accordance with the given literature data.

In an analogous manner propane-1,3-diphosphonic acid, ethane-1,1,2-triphosphonic acid, butane-1,1,4-triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonic acid, pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonic

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acid, hexane-2,2,6-triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5,5-tetra-phosphonic acid or heptane-1,4,4,7-tetraphosphonic acid, are synthesized.

Example 2

5 A) A dental implant made from titanium in the form of a screw, having a diameter of 4 mm and a length of 10 mm, is produced in a conventional manner. The surface to be
10 implanted into the body is provided with a surface roughness according to EP 0 388 575 by sandblasting the surface using an average grain size of 0.25-0.5 mm, followed by a treatment with a mixture of an aqueous acidic mixture containing a mixture of hydrochloric acid/sulfuric acid/water in a ratio of 2:1:1, at a temperature of about 80°C for about 5 minutes so that a rough surface of the implant is obtained which is
15 about 3.6 times larger compared to the polished surface, as measured with the voltametric method in aqueous electrolyte with 0.15M NaCl. The surface of the implant is then chemically treated with a nitrogen plasma to yield a titanium nitride surface as described in B.-O. Aronsson et al., J.
20 Biomed. Mater. Res. 35 (1997), pp. 49f. The treated implant, resp. surface, is sonicated in bidistilled water during 15 minutes at 30°C, washed with pure water followed by sonication in water (three times) for 10 minutes and then rinsed with pure hexane and dried under vacuum (10 mm Hg,
25 room temperature).

B) The implant as produced in chapter A) above is then put into an aqueous solution of (i) methylenediphosphonic acid [$1,5 \times 10^{-3}$ mol per 10 ml of distilled water], (ii) ethane-1,1,2-triphosphonic acid [6.2×10^{-4} mol/10 ml, in distilled
30 water], (iii) pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonic acid [1.2×10^{-4} mol/10 ml, in distilled water], (iv) pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonic acid potassium salt [1.2×10^{-4} mol/10 ml, in distilled water] and left there at room temperature for 15 minutes. The implant is then rinsed with pure water.

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The implant prepared according to the preparations B(i), B(ii), B(iii) and B(iv) are implanted into the upper jaw of a mini pig. The osseointegration is measured as the torque needed to unfasten the implant from the jaw where it had osseointegrated. Comparative test results are given for the untreated implant. The results are given in Table 1. Analogous results are obtained for further phosphonic acids given herein above. Analysis with XPS and ToF-SIMS indicated that a molecular (mono) layer was formed on the implant surface as well as on the titanium nitride surface, and that the roughness of the surface did not seem to influence this behaviour.

Table 1

Preparation	Torque* after 2 weeks (Ncm)	torque* after 3 weeks (Ncm)	torque* after 4 weeks (Ncm)
B(i)	31	72	130
B(ii)	30	80	125
B(iii)	32	79	132
B(iv)	29	83	124
Comparative Test	20	60	100

* the torque is given in Ncm as an average value from three measurements for each test.

The results illustrate the improved osseointegration of the implants according to the present invention compared to the non treated implants.

Example 3

Example 2 is repeated with the difference that the original titanium surface of the implant is treated with methane in an argon glow discharge plasma so that a surface of titanium carbide is obtained. The treatment is performed as described

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in B.-O. Aronsson et al., J. Biomed. Mater. Res. 35 (1997), pp. 49f. Analogous test results are obtained analogous to those given in Table 1.

Example 4

5 Example 2 is repeated with the difference that the implant is made of zirconium, having a zirconium oxide surface, and that the compound according to formula (I) is ethane-1,1,3-triphosphonic acid which has been modified by linking the amine terminus of a Glycine molecule to one of the
10 phosphonate groups. Analogous test results are obtained as given in Table 1.

Example 5.

Examples 2 and 3 are repeated with the difference that the compound according to formula (I) is the ethane-1,1,3-
15 triphosphonic acid which is modified by linking the amine terminus of a GRGDS cell binding polypeptide to one of the phosphonate groups. Analogous results are obtained as given in Table 1.

Example 6.

20 Examples 2 and 3 are repeated with a the difference that the compound according to formula (I) is ethane-1,1,3-triphosphonic acid which is modified by linking the amine terminus (Methionine) of a human Bone Morphogenic Protein type 2 (BMP-2) to one of the phosphonate groups, which gives
25 analogous test results as given in Table 1.

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CLAIMS:

1. An endosseous implant for application to a human or animal bone, said implant having a surface made from a metal, a metal alloy or a ceramic, wherein the metal is chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel or stainless steel and wherein the alloy comprises two or more metals selected from the group consisting of chromium, niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt, nickel and stainless steel, wherein said surface has a layer formed thereon of at least one pharmaceutically acceptable organic compound carrying at least one phosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof, which is a pharmaceutically acceptable ester, amide or salt thereof, corresponding to formula (I):



wherein A means A_1 or A_2 , and

A_1 is a residue of a linear, branched or cyclic, saturated or unsaturated, hydrocarbon residue with n carbon atoms, wherein said residue is unsubstituted or substituted by carboxyl, wherein

n is a number from 1 to 70, and

p is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6;

A_2 is a residue of an amino acid or of a sequence of amino acids respectively of a protein or of a polypeptide; or a residue of a specific drug molecule, wherein each residue A_2 carries p phosphonic acid groups, and

p is 1 to 6, when A_2 is a residue of an amino acid, of a sequence of amino acids, of a protein or of a polypeptide; or

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p is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, when A₂ is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group.

2. The implant according to claim 1, wherein said A₁
5 residue is further interrupted by one or more oxygen or sulphur or nitrogen atoms, carrying p phosphonic acid groups, or a combination thereof.
3. The implant according to claim 1 or 2, wherein
when A₂ is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally
10 not bearing any phosphonic group, A₂ is defined as for A₁.
4. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 3,
wherein the surface of the implant is made of a ceramic
selected from the group consisting of oxide surfaces,
carbide surfaces, nitride surfaces, oxynitride surfaces,
15 carbonitride surfaces or oxycarbide surfaces of chromium,
niobium, tantalum, vanadium, zirconium, aluminium, cobalt,
nickel, stainless steels and alloys thereof.
5. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 3,
wherein the surface of the implant is made of titanium
20 carbide, titanium nitride, titanium oxynitride, titanium
carbonitride, titanium oxycarbide, or a combination thereof.
6. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 3,
wherein the surface of the implant is made from a metal
oxide or an apatite material.
- 25 7. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 3,
wherein the surface of the implant is made of a glass
material.
8. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7,
wherein

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n in residue A₁ is a number from 1 to 40, and

p in formula (I) is 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5; or

p is 1, 2, 3 or 4, when A₂ is a residue of an amino acid or of a sequence of amino acids, of a protein or of a polypeptide; or

p is 1, 2 or 3, when A₂ is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group.

9. The implant according to claim 8, wherein when A₂ is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group, A₂ is defined as for A₁.

10. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein A has a meaning of A₁, and: (a) when n is 1, p is 2 and A is -CH₂-; (b) when n is 1, p is 3 or 4; (c) when n is 2 to 10, p is 2, provided each phosphonic acid group or phosphonic acid ester group is bound to a different carbon atom within the same molecule; (d) when n is 2 to 10, p is 3, 4, 5 or 6; (e) when n is 11 to 70, p is 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

11. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein A has a meaning of A₂, and p is 1 or 3-6, for the case that A₂ is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group.

12. The implant according to claim 11, wherein when A₂ is a residue of a specific drug molecule originally not bearing any phosphonic group, A₂ is defined as for A₁.

13. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein A₁ is a saturated hydrocarbon residue of the formula -(C_nH_{2n+2-p})-, wherein n means 1 to 70.

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14. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the compound of formula (I) is an alkali salt.

15. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the compound of formula (I) is selected from the
5 group consisting of a saturated monophosphonic acid, a saturated polyphosphonic acid, an unsaturated monophosphonic acid and an unsaturated polyphosphonic acid.

16. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable ester is the
10 isopropyl phosphonate or ethyl phosphonate ester.

17. The implant according to claim 16, wherein the ester is selected from the group consisting of tetra
isopropyl methylenediphosphonate, hexaethyl ethane-1,1,2-
triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl butane-1,1,4-triphosphonate,
15 hexaisopropyl pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonate, hexaisopropyl hexane-2,2,6-
triphosphonate, octaisopropyl propane-1,1,3,3-
tetraphosphonate, octaisopropyl heptane-1,4,4,7-
tetraphosphonate, and octaisopropyl nonane-1,5,5,9-
20 tetraphosphonate.

18. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the compound of formula (I) represents a
Transforming Growth Factor beta (TGF- β) as defined by the
members of the superfamily of growth factors, selected from
25 the group consisting of TGF- β 1, TGF- β 2, TGF- β 3, TGF- β 4, and TGF- β 5, wherein in each member the peptide chain has been
modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group
or a derivative thereof.

19. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7,
30 wherein the compound of formula (I) represents a Bone
Morphogenic Protein (BMP), selected from the group

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consisting of BMP-2 (BMP-2a), BMP-3, BMP-4, BMP-2b, BMP-5, BMP-6, BMP-7, OP-1, BMP-8, OP-2, BMP-9, BMP-10, BMP-11, BMP-12, and BMP-13, wherein the peptide chain has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a
5 derivative thereof.

20. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the compound of formula (I) is selected from the group consisting of 2-amino-4,4-bis-(diethoxy-phosphoryl)-butyric acid, 2-amino-5-(diethoxy-phosphoryl)-pentanoic
10 acid, 2-amino-4-phosphonobutyric acid, and a combination thereof.

21. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the compound of formula (I) is selected from one of the principal twenty amino acids, wherein the amino acid has
15 been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof.

22. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the compound of formula (I) is a RGD-containing peptide, selected from the group consisting of a
20 RGDS-peptide, a GRGDS-peptide, a RGDV-peptide, a RGDE-peptide, a RGDT-peptide, and a combination thereof, which has been modified to contain at least one alkylphosphonic acid group or a derivative thereof.

23. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7,
25 wherein the compound of formula (I) is selected from the group consisting of 1-hydroxy-3-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-propylidene diphosphonic acid, cycloheptylamino-methylene diphosphonic acid, 1-hydroxy-2-imidazo-(1,2-a)-pyridin-3-yl-ethylidene diphosphonic acid, 1-hydroxy-2-(3-pyridinyl)-ethylidene
30 diphosphonic acid, (4-chlorophenyl)thio-methylene diphosphonic acid and 1-hydroxy-2-(1H-imidazole-1-yl)ethylidene diphosphonic acid.

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24. The implant according to any one of claims 1 to 7 in the form of screw, plate, nail, or pin.

25. A process for producing the implant according to any one of claims 1 to 24, which comprises treating said surface with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable organic compound of formula (I) or a salt or ester or an amide thereof, to form said layer thereon.

26. An air tight plastic or metallic packaging material comprising the implant according to claim 24.

10 27. The air tight plastic or metallic packaging material according to claim 26, which is evacuated or filled with an inert gas or an inert liquid.

28. The packaging material according to claim 26 or 27, wherein said packaging material is filled with pure water containing an inorganic salt, or a compound of formula (I), a salt or ester thereof, or a combination thereof.

29. The packaging material according to claim 28, wherein the concentration of inorganic salt, a compound of formula (I) or a salt or ester thereof is from about 1.0×10^{-5} mol/10 ml to 5×10^{-2} mol/10 ml of the water.

30. A compound of formula (I) or salt or ester thereof according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein p is 3 to 6, and n is 4 to 70.

25 31. The compound according to claim 30, selected from the group consisting of butane-1,1,4-triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5-triphosphonic acid, pentane-2,2,5-triphosphonic acid, hexane-2,2,6-triphosphonic acid, pentane-1,1,5,5-tetraphosphonic acid, heptane-1,4,4,7-

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tetraphosphonic acid, nonane-1,5,5,9-tetraphosphonic acid, a salt thereof, an ester thereof and an amide thereof.