Consumer Justice Almanac

Summer 2015

A Publication From The Justice Attorneys of Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz

INSIDE

Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz, PLLC

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{Fluoroquinolones}

Levaquin® and Avelox® Antibiotics Linked to Peripheral Neuropathy

The FDA has issued a drug safety alert requiring the manufacturer of antibiotics such as Levaquin® (levofloxacin) and Avelox® (moxifloxacin) to revise the labeling to warn patients of the risk of permanent nerve damage, called peripheral neuropathy. Fluoroquinolones (FLQs) are a class of popular and highly potent antibiotics that are routinely used to treat relatively minor infections such as sinusitis, urinary tract infections, and sore throats. Levaquin® and Avelox® are the largest brand name drugs in this class. Symptoms of neuropathy include pain, burning, tingling, numbness and/or weakness or increased sensitivity to touch, pain, heat and cold.

In August 2013, the FDA required new labeling to reflect that peripheral neuropathy may occur rapidly and potentially be permanent. The FDA's investigation was prompted by continuing inquiries from Congress and consumer complaints describing prolonged, disabling neuropathy following FLQ use. The FDA's review found that the onset of peripheral neuropathy after FLQ use can be rapid, often within a few days. It can also be permanent, with 40% experiencing peripheral neuropathy for a year or more. The FDA says the risk of peripheral neuropathy occurs with FLQ's taken by mouth or by injection.

In a May 2014 letter to the U.S. Senate, Dr. Jay S. Cohen said that "In my 40+ years in pharamacovigilance, FLQ's surpass Vioxx® and Thalidomide in the degree of permanent harm done." Fluoroquinolone drugs include:

• levofloxacin (Levaquin®) • ciprofloxacin (Cipro®)
• moxifloxacin (Avelox®) • norfloxacin (Noroxin®)
• ofloxacin (Floxin®) • gemifloxacin (Factive®)

The attorneys of Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz are actively pursuing claims against the FLQ manufacturers. If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy or has suffered serious nerve damage following the use of Levaquin®, Avelox® or Cipro®, call the lawyers of AWKO immediately to discuss your legal rights. ❖

{Talc}

Household Staple Talcum Powder *May Cause* Ovarian Cancer

We tend to think of talcum powder, composed of magnesium, silicon, and oxygen, as a common and safe household item used to prevent dryness and rashes in a variety of applications. Common household products containing talcum powder include baby powder, facial powders, and adult body powders. Unfortunately, studies have now revealed that there is an association between women who use talcum powder on a regular basis in their pelvic area and the potential development of ovarian cancer.

Studies have reported as high as a 30% increase in the risk of developing ovarian cancer for women exposed to talcum powder on a regular basis. As a result, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified the perineal (genital) use of talcum-based body powders as "possibly carcinogenic to humans." Because talcum powder is found in products such as condoms, diaphragms and sanitary napkins, there is a significant risk of talcum powder coming into contact with the ovaries.

If you or a family member has developed ovarian cancer after prolonged use of talcum-based body powders, you may have a valuable legal claim. Contact us today to speak with one of our attorneys about this issue. ❖

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{Xarelto®}

Anticoagulant Xarelto® *May* Increase Risk of Stroke, Blood Clots *and* Internal Bleeding

Xarelto® (rivaroxaban) is a newer prescription anticoagulant, or blood thinner, marketed by Bayer and Johnson & Johnson. Xarelto® received FDA approval in 2011 to reduce the risk of strokes, blood clots, deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE) in patients who have undergone hip or knee replacement surgery.

Xarelto® is one of several drugs in a new class of anticoagulants (blood thinners) called direct factor Xa inhibitors. The first of these new class of drugs to gain FDA approval was Pradaxa®. The manufacturer of Pradaxa®, Boehringer Ingelheim, recently settled the lawsuits it was facing, agreeing to pay $650 million to approximately 4,000 people across the United Sates for similar bleeding injuries.

Xarelto® is like other blood thinners, in that it carries the risk of internal bleeding side effects. However, the internal bleeding caused by Xarelto® cannot be controlled or reversed by physicians, unlike the traditional class of blood thinners which include Coumadin® (warfarin). The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) advises that Xarelto® has been associated with "serious, disabling or fatal injury," including blood clots or thromboembolic events.

Blood Pressure Medication Benicar® Linked *to* Gastrointestinal Injury

{Benicar®}

In 2013, the FDA required Daiichi Sankyo, the manufacturer of Benicar®, to update its label to reflect the risk of users developing sprue-like enteropathy. This gastrointestinal disorder, caused by the death of the villi in the small intestine, mimics Celiac disease and leads to symptoms which include severe, chronic diarrhea leading to substantial weight loss, hospitalizations or even death.

Daiichi Sankyo spent nearly one billion dollars promoting Benicar®, asserting that it was superior to other drugs in its class. However, according to several studies, none of the other angioestin receptor blocker (ARB) drugs cause the severe injuries associated with Benicar®.

If you or a loved one ingested Benicar®, Benicar HCT®, Tribenzor® or Azor® and developed chronic diarrhea or chronic vomiting that required medical care while ingesting the medicine, you may have a valuable legal claim. Give us a call today at **(844) 432-2774** for more information. ❖

After filing one of the first Xarelto® cases in the country, senior partner Neil Overholtz was appointed by the federal judge overseeing all cases nationwide to the Plaintiff's Steering Committee. Mr. Overholtz was one of only 12 lawyers selected out of nearly 100 applicants nationwide. Mr. Overholtz has also been chosen to lead the discovery effort on behalf of Plaintiffs, as co-chair of the Plaintiff's Discovery Committee. That committee will focus its efforts on document investigation and depositions of corporate witnesses here in the US and in Europe where the drug was developed and tested.

If you or a loved one suffered a harmful side effect such as a stroke, blood clot, or internal bleeding while taking Xarelto®, you may have a valuable legal claim. Contact us today at **(844) 432-2774** to speak with one of the attorneys on the forefront of Xarelto® litigation. ❖

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{Risperdal®}

Jury Awards $2.5 Million In First Risperdal® Trial

Risperdal® is an "atypical antipsychotic" medication indicated for the treatment of autism, bipolar disease and schizophrenia. Its manufacturer, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson, marketed Risperdal® to treat children for unapproved uses including the treatment of mood, sleep and attention deficit disorders. As a result of their off-label promotion, Johnson & Johnson has been forced to pay $2.2 billion in fines to state and federal agencies.

Unfortunately, for the adolescent male children prescribed Risperdal®, the drug can cause the pituitary gland to increase its production of prolactin. Prolactin causes the development of breasts. For male children, the development of breasts (known as gynecomastia) can be devastating physically and psychologically. Unfortunately, the condition is permanent with many having to resort to surgery as the only means of correction. Mild cases may be resolved by using a liposuction procedure, while more severe cases require a full mastectomy.

In 2015, two cases brought on behalf of boys who developed gynecomastia after ingesting Risperdal® have been tried. In the first case, tried in Philadelphia, the jury awarded the plaintiff 2.5 million dollars. In the second, the jury found Johnson & Johnson failed to adequately warn about the risks of gynecomastia, but determined the failure did not cause the plaintiff to be injured. Additional trials are scheduled for later this year.

If you took Risperdal® as a child, or have a male child who took Risperdal®, and subsequently developed breasts or were diagnosed with gynecomastia, you may have a valuable legal claim. Call our attorneys today for more information about your legal rights. ❖

{Incretin Mimetics}

Byetta®, Januvia® and Victoza® Linked to Pancreatitis and Pancreatic Cancer

Diabetes drugs in the class known as incretin mimetics, including **Byetta®, Januvia® and Victoza®**, have been linked to cases of severe pancreatitis, and more recently cases of pancreatic cancer.

Unfortunately, pancreatic cancer has one of the highest cancer mortality rates.

Lawsuits for Byetta®, Januvia® and/or Victoza® users suffering from severe pancreatitis and/or pancreatic cancer have been consolidated for pre-trial purposes before a federal district court in San Diego, California. Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis and Overholtz has been appointed to serve on the Executive Committee that will help lead the litigation for the claimants.

Over the past several months, the firm's attorneys have been busy taking depositions of corporate executives, regulatory employees, and scientists of the drug manufacturers. Merck and the other manufacturers are attempting to hide behind the FDA, and downplay the clear warning signal they received about how these drugs can cause and promote this deadly cancer. Our firm is committed to holding them responsible and accountable for putting profits ahead of safety, and harming our clients in the process.

If you or a loved one developed pancreatic cancer and ingested any of the incretin mimetic drugs, Byetta®, Januvia® or Victoza®, our firm can help. Please call us today for more information about your potentially valuable legal claim. ❖

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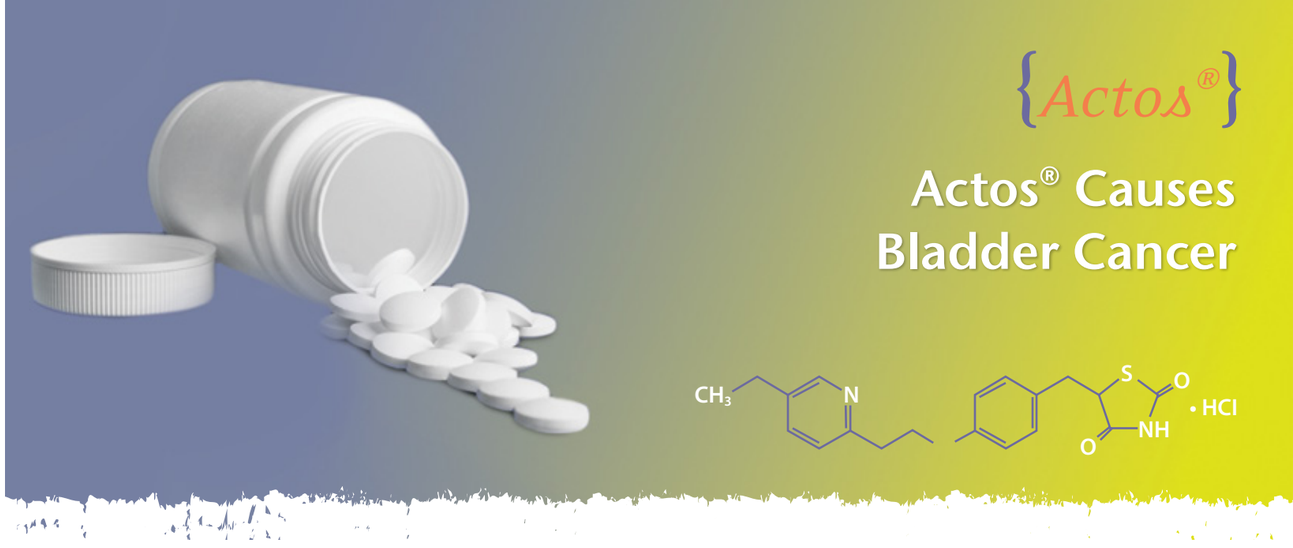

$2.4 Billion Dollar Actos® Settlement Follows Win in Bladder Cancer Trial - 7th Largest Verdict in History

Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz attorneys have been leaders in the charge that has resulted in an agreement to settle the claims of approximately 9,000 Actos users who developed bladder cancer. The settlement has been reported to be one of the largest of its kind in U.S. history - 2.4 billion dollars. AWKO's Neil Overholtz was a member of the final negotiating team that secured the deal.

The allocation of settlement funds will be determined through a claims administration process with the oversight of a court-appointed Special Master. Each claimant's allocation will be determined using case-specific factors, such as cumulative dosage and smoking history, along with the extent of injury.

The settlement was reached after AWKO attorneys helped try a case on behalf of Actos user Terence Allen which resulted in the seventh largest verdict in U.S. history. That verdict, in excess of nine billion dollars, has since been reduced by the trial court to a little over thirty-seven million and is currently on appeal.

AWKO lawyers Neil Overholtz, Nathan Bess and Sam Geisler assisted in trying the case and played key roles in the build up to the case. Mr. Overholtz cross-examined key trial witnesses Dr. Mondira Bhattacharya, Takeda's head of US Drug Safety, and Dr. Meng Tan, Eli Lilly's Medical Director. Mr. Overholtz also took a majority of the pre-trial depositions of the witnesses in the case.

Individuals who developed bladder cancer following their use of Actos may have a very valuable legal claim. It is critical that such individuals act quickly and have top-quality legal advice to maximize the value of their claims. If you or a loved one developed bladder cancer following the use of Actos, we urge you to give us a call today. ❖

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Significant Recoveries *for* Victims *of* Failed Hip Replacements

For almost fifteen years, AWKO attorneys have been at the forefront of the failed orthopedic device litigation throughout the United States. Led by Partner Doug Kreis, AWKO has a track record of delivering the best possible recoveries to its clients suffering the devastating effects of a failed orthopedic device.

AWKO is currently pursuing claims on behalf of individuals with failed hip implants manufactured by Stryker (Rejuvenate® and ABG II®), DePuy (ASR™ and Pinnacle®), and Wright (Conserve® and Profemur®). Some recipients of these hip implant systems may have developing problems which have not yet manifested in symptoms. We urge anyone with one of these hip systems to consult with their physician and request a blood test to detect whether they have elevated levels of heavy metals - specifically chromium and cobalt - in their blood (referred to as metallosis). The test is easy and can help detect a problem before greater damage is done.

For individuals with failed Stryker or DePuy hip implant systems, there are immediate settlement opportunities with over two billion dollars having been set aside to compensate victims. If you or a loved one have been implanted with a Stryker, DePuy, or Wright hip system and have experienced any problems including failure and/or metallosis, we urge you to call us today for more information. Settlement opportunities may have limited time frames, so we urge you to act quickly. ❖

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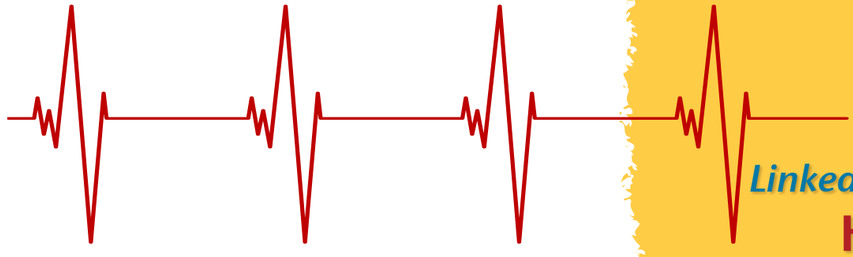


{Viagra®}

Viagra® *May* Cause Deadly Melanoma

To treat erectile dysfunction and pulmonary hypertension, doctors have prescribed Pfizer's Viagra® to over 45 million men since it hit the market in 1998. The ubiquitous little blue pill poses a potentially deadly threat to all men who have taken it.

According to a recent study in JAMA Internal Medicine, Viagra® increases the incidence of melanoma, the deadliest of skin cancers. The article found that men who had a history of taking Viagra® were approximately twice as likely to suffer from invasive melanoma.

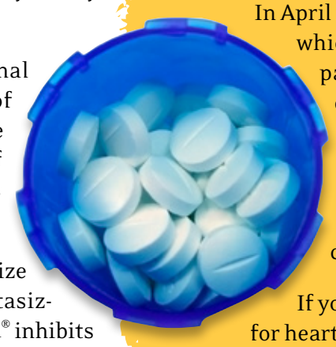
Melanoma begins in the skin cells that synthesize melanin to pigment in the skin before metastasizing, or spreading, if not diagnosed early. Viagra® inhibits the enzyme PDE5A, increasing melanin production and potentially making melanoma cells more invasive, stimulating the cancer's development. Melanoma accounts for less than 2% of skin cancer cases but a majority of skin cancer deaths.

Pfizer has not taken any steps to warn the public or its consumers about the association between Viagra® and melanoma. If you or a loved one has developed melanoma after taking Viagra®, call the attorneys at AWKO today to learn more about your legal rights. ❖

Diabetes Drug *Linked to* Heart Failure Hospitalizations *and* Death

(Also Pancreatic & Thyroid Cancers)

Recently, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced that it is investigating the link between serious heart failure and deaths associated with the diabetes drug Onglyza® (saxagliptin). A recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) reported an increased rate of hospitalization for heart failure in patients taking Onglyza® or Kombiglyze XR® (a combination drug of Onglyza® and Metformin®).



In April 2014, after reviewing the study results which involved over 16,000 clinical trial patients, the FDA advisory panel voted 14-1 to add information about the increased risk of heart failure to the Onglyza® label. Drugs like Onglyza® have already been associated with other serious injuries including pancreaic cancer and thyroid cancer.

If you or a loved one has been hospitalized for heart failure, or if a loved one has died from heart failure, after taking Onglyza®, please call us today. We are also taking cases involving pancreatic cancer and thyroid cancer in patients taking Onglyza®. ❖

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Medications Taken During Pregnancy *May* Cause Birth Defects

{ *Zoloft®, Effexor® Prozac®, Paxil®, Topamax®, Celexa®/Lexapro® and Zofran®* }

Most prescription medications are clearly labeled to indicate whether they may be used safely by pregnant women. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. AWKO attorneys have been the leaders in the fight for families who have children born with defects caused by a prescription medication that was not properly labeled. Improperly labeled drugs that have been linked to birth defects include:

Zofran® - This anti-nausea medication manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline has been prescribed to millions of women suffering the effects of morning sickness. While not approved for morning sickness, the label indicates that it is safe for use by pregnant women. Studies have indicated that is not the case, however, linking Zofran® with cardiovascular deformities and cleft palate.

Zoloft®, Effexor® Prozac®, Paxil®, and Celexa® / Lexapro® - These antidepressants are part of a class of drugs known as selective serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SSRI & SNRI). They have been prescribed to millions of women during pregnancy. Multiple studies have shown that these drugs are linked to a potentially increased risk of serious birth defects in babies, ranging from skull defects to cleft lip/palate to life threatening heart defects.

Topamax® and Depakote® - these anti-seizure medications have also been linked to serious birth defects. Topamax® has been linked to cleft lip/palate and Depokote® has been linked to neural tube defects such as spina bifida. Johnson & Johnson, the maker of Topamax®, has recently settled dozens of birth defect claims that were scheduled for trial in Philadelphia state court, which indicates that plaintiffs in those cases can successfully prove that the drug maker should be held liable.

Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis and Overholtz attorneys are leading the fight for justice for victims of these medications. Both the Zoloft® and Effexor® litigations have been consolidated into a multi-district litigation (MDL) and transferred to a federal court in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for further proceedings. The MDL court has appointed two AWKO partners (Bryan Aylstock and Jason Richards) to the Plaintiff's Steering Committees in the Zoloft® and Effexor® litigations, meaning AWKO will be leading the fight for claimants from around the country.

If you were taking any of these medications while pregnant, there is a possibility that your child's birth defect was caused by the drug - even if you stopped taking it once you found out you were pregnant.

Our attorneys have been litigating SSRI and seizure medication birth defect cases for many years, and have recovered tens of millions of dollars for our clients.

AWKO attorneys have been appointed by multiple courts to lead the ongoing SSRI litigation and expect to be appointed to a leadership position in the emerging Zofran® litigation. If you or a loved one took any of these drugs while pregnant and had a child born with a birth defect, you should contact us immediately. ❖

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{*Transvaginal Mesh*}

Verdicts *and* Settlements *in* Transvaginal Mesh Litigation

The litigation over defective mesh products sold to women to treat **pelvic organ prolapse (POP) and/or stress urinary incontinence (SUI)** is among the largest in the history of pharmaceutical and medical device cases. More than 80,000 lawsuits have been filed in courts around the country.

AWKO lawyers are the leaders in the fight for women around the country suffering from the adverse effects of the defective mesh products. Partner Bryan Aylstock has been appointed as Coordinating Co-Lead Counsel to oversee all federal court litigation against the mesh manufacturers. AWKO's team of lawyers have reviewed more documents, taken more depositions and tried more cases than any other attorneys involved in TVM litigation. AWKO's leadership and tireless work has put them in the position to achieve the best possible outcomes for their TVM clients.

AWKO has reached agreement in principle to settle claims for women implanted with defective mesh manufactured by the following entities:

- **Endo Pharmaceuticals (f/k/a American Medical Systems)**
- **Coloplast**
- **GMD**

AWKO is in active settlement negotiations with the remaining mesh manufacturers, but will continue to press forward with litigation until settlement is reached. Recent trials involving AWKO TVM clients include:

- **March 2, 2015 - Bellew v. Ethicon – Settled Prior to Verdict**
- **November 20, 2014 – Tyree v. Boston Scientific – $18,500,000 (four plaintiffs)**
- **November 14, 2014 – Eghnayem v. Boston Scientific $26,700,000 (four plaintiffs)**

These positive trial results are helping us in our negotiations with defendants Bard, Boston Scientific, Ethicon, and Mentor.

If you or a loved one has been implanted with a pelvic mesh product and have experienced any adverse effects - pain, pain with intercourse, bleeding, new urinary dysfunction, erosion, surgery to remove the mesh, or anything else - the time to make a claim is now. There are limited time frames in which to participate in the settlements referenced above and limited time to file a lawsuit and preserve your right to participate in a settlement for the remaining manufacturers.

Contact the attorneys at AWKO if you believe you have been injured as a result of a transvaginal mesh implant, even if you have not yet had a revision/removal surgery. Our trained TVM team is available to answer your questions about pursuing a claim against the manufacturer of the transvaginal mesh you received. ❖

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TIGERPAW® System II Recall Litigation

The FDA issued a Class 1 recall on April 23, 2015 of the TigerPaw II® left atrial appendage (LAA) closure device used during open heart surgery to mitigate post-operative stroke in patients with atrial fibrillation. The recall was issued following reports the device could cause tearing of the left atrial wall along with bleeding events and possible death.

Currently, 4,154 TigerPaw II® devices - made by US-based LAAx (Livermore, CA) and sold by Maquet Medical Systems (Wayne, NJ) between April 1, 2013 and March 23, 2015 - have been recalled.

If you or a loved one had surgery where a TigerPaw System II® was used, please contact us today. ❖

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{Power Morcellator}

Hysterectomy or Fibroid Removal Tools Can Increase Risk of Cancer

Power morcellators are cutting tools used in minimally invasive laproscopic hysterectomy and myomectomies (procedures to remove fibroids) to remove the uterus or fibroids through a small incision. Unfortunately, the use of power morcellators creates a serious health risk for women with undetected uterine cancer. When used in women with undetected uterine cancer, the morcellator, which acts similar to a hand blender, essentially distributes cancer cells throughout the pelvis - potentially accelerating the growth of the cancer and/or seeding it in different areas of the body. The FDA has estimated that as many as 1 in 350 women undergoing a hysterectomy or myomectomy may have undetected uterine cancer.

In April 2014, the FDA issued a warning that the use of power morcellators may spread cancer throughout a woman's body before doctors are aware of a malignancy. As a result, Johnson & Johnson has halted sales of these surgical tools, only after they were used in thousands of procedures.

If you or a loved one had a hysterectomy, fibroid removal or other surgical procedure where a power morcellator was used and were subsequently diagnosed with cancer including uterine sarcoma, leiomyosarcoma, or other cancers, you may be entitled to significant financial compensation. The attorneys of AWKO are leading the fight against the manufacturers of these surgical tools on behalf of women nationwide. Contact us today to learn more about your legal options. ❖

CONSUMER ALERTS

Automotive Air Bag Recall

Massive Airbag Recall – Failure Associated *with* Serious Injury *and* Death

Over 17 million vehicles sold in the United States with airbags manufactured by the Japanese entity Takata have been recalled. The defective airbags have been placed in a wide range of manufacturers' vehicles including BMW, Ford, GM, Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Subaru and Toyota. Reports have indicated that Takata may have been aware of the defect in its airbags as early as 2004.

As of Spring 2015, nearly 90% of the vehicles with defective airbags remain unrepaired. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has urged consumers with an affected vehicle to take action quickly to have their airbag replaced and to reduce the risk of serious injury or death. If you are uncertain whether your vehicle has a defective airbag, you can find out by entering your vehicle's VIN in the "Search for Recalls" section of the U.S. government website www.safercar.gov.

In affected vehicles, the inflator and propellant devices in the airbag may deploy improperly in the event of a crash. As a result, crash vehicle occupants do not receive the protection from crash forces that they should and, even worse, may be subjected to a shrapnel-like discharge from the airbag. To date, there have been hundreds of injuries reported as a result of these defective airbags including several alleged deaths.

If you or a loved one has a vehicle with a recalled airbag and have been seriously injured by the failure of that airbag, give us a call today for more information. ❖

Deluxe / Harland Clarke Check Ordering

If you ordered checks online, you may have been charged unreasonable and deceptive shipping fees. Both Deluxe and Harland Clarke charge customers more for delivery of brand name checks than they do for their generic products. This unfairly increases the companies' profit while deceiving the consumer and conflicts with the ethical guidelines promulgated by the Direct Marketing Association.

If you or a loved one has ordered checks online, please call us right away for more information.

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Ignition Switch Failures *Can* Result in Serious Injuries

General Motors has recalled over 2.6 million vehicles due to defective and dangerous ignition switches. Following a "jarring event" or use of a heavy key ring, the ignition switch may slip out of the "run" position, shutting down the engine, power steering and the braking system. This loss of power may cause drivers to lose control of their vehicle and, if the car crashes, the air bags to fail to deploy. The results may be fatal.

The ignition switch defect was discovered by GM a decade before the 2014 product recalls were issued. In 2005, GM engineers considered resolving this problem but decided any solution to make the switches safer would be too costly. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration fined GM $35 million for failing to disclose the problem, and the U.S. Justice Department is investigating the case for possible criminal charges.

The recalls are sweeping, including 2005-10 Chevrolet Cobalt, 2006-10 Pontiac Solstice, 2007-10 Pontiac G5 and Saturn Sky, 2006-11 Chevrolet HHR and 2003-7 Saturn Ion, 2000-2005 Chevrolet Impala and Monte Carlo, 1997-2005 Chevrolet Malibu, 1999-2004 Oldsmobile Alero, 1998-2002 Oldsmobile Intrigue, 1999-2005 Pontiac Grand Am and 2004-2008 Pontiac Grand Prix. All have the same ignition switches.

We are now pursuing civil suits against GM for the injuries and deaths resulting from accidents where the car has "turned off." If you believe you or a loved one have had an accident as a result of a faulty ignition switch of a GM vehicle, please contact the attorneys at Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz to discuss your options. ❖

Hertz Rental Cars

We are presently investigating a potentially unlawful overcharge practice for rental cars charged by Hertz in Illinois and Missouri. If you, or someone you know, has rented a Hertz vehicle for personal (non-business) use in the last three years in Illinois or the last five years in Missouri, please contact the attorneys at AWKO right away for more information. ❖

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FIRM NEWS & NOTES

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AWKO Attorney Recognition:

Bryan Aylstock

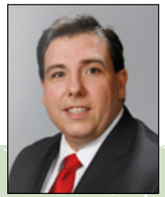
Appointed:
Second term on the Florida Bar's Professionalism Committee. The new term will begin July 1, 2015 for one year.

Membership:
The National Association of Distinguished Counsel, an organization dedicated to promoting the highest standards of legal excellence.

Douglass Kreis

Appointed:
Co-Lead Counsel in *In Re: ObTape Transvaginal Mesh Multi-District Litigation* by the United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia

Co-Liaison (Lead) Counsel in *In Re: IVS Tunneller Transvaginal Mesh Consolidated Litigation* by the Court in Middlesex County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



Neil Overholtz

Appointed:
Plaintiff's Steering Committee for *In Re: Xarelto Litigation* by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

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FIRM NEWS & NOTES *con't...*

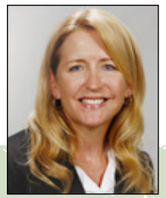
Jason Richards

Appointed:
Chair of the Florida Bar Journal/News Editorial Board for the 2015-16 term.

Publications:
The Suffolk University Law Review article co-written with Sam Geisler, "We, the Class: What the Founding Generation Can Tell Us About Adequate Representation in Class Action Litigation," is scheduled to be published in 2015.

Stephen Echsner

Elected:
Stephen Echsner has been elected to the Florida Bar's Board of Governors.



Renee Baggett

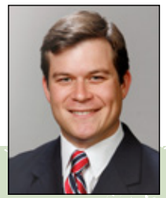
Awards:
2014-15 Rising Star, Florida Superlawyers

Daniel Thornburgh

Awards:
2014-15 Rising Star, Florida Superlawyers

Nathan Bess

Named:
Nathan Bess has been named a partner in the firm. Mr. Bess leads the firm's environmental tort section and has been a leader in litigating pharmaceutical cases including Actos®, Yaz®, Incretin Mimetics, Talc and many more.



Sam Geisler

Appointed:
Co-chair of the Xarelto® MDL Regulatory Discovery Committee.

Publications:
The Suffolk University Law Review article co-written with Jason Richards, "We, the Class: What the Founding Generation Can Tell Us About Adequate Representation in Class Action Litigation," is scheduled to be published in 2015.

COMMUNITY INVOLVMENT

The lawyers and staff at Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz share in the belief that supporting the local community is an important part of being an advocate for justice.

Scholarship Fund Created

The AWKO Justice Foundation announced that it would award ten scholarships to area highschool seniors committed to the pursuit of justice. Applicants for the scholarship were asked to write an essay explaining what justice means to them and what they plan to do with their lives to further the pursuit of justice.

Funding for the scholarships was raised, in part, through the firm's first "Justice Jog". The super hero themed 5k Race/1 Mile Fun Run was a tremendous success with close to 500 participants. Participants had a great time and helped to raise money for an extremely worthy cause.

The AWKO Justice Foundation's second annual "Help the Kids" Tennis Tournament benefitting local area elementary schools built on the success of the first tournament. The highlight of the tournament was the "battle of the sexes" grudge match featuring AWKO partner Doug Kreis and a local tennis pro. While Mr. Kreis put up a valiant fight, the female pro proved why she is a pro! The real winners in the tournament, however, were the schools. Proceeds from the tournament allowed the AWKO Justice Foundation to make a donation of $14,000 to Brentwood and Weiss elementary schools.

AWKO staff members enjoyed another fantastic United Way Day of Caring working on a variety of projects at Weiss Elementary School in Pensacola. Everyone involved enjoyed seeing some familiar faces at the school and knowing their hard work is appreciated by students and teachers alike.

Many members of the AWKO family participated in the annual Breast Cancer Walk in October 2014, to raise money and awareness of this disease. AWKO is proud to raise money for the fight against breast cancer!

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INSIDE

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION RELATED TO DRUGS AND MEDICAL DEVICES!

CONSUMER JUSTICE
Almanac
A Publication From The Justice Attorneys of Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz
Summer 2015

{Fluoroquinolones}

Antibiotics Linked To Peripheral Neuropathy

{Transvaginal Mesh}

Verdicts Come In For Women Suffering After Being Implanted With Transvaginal Mesh

{Viagra®}

Viagra® May Cause Deadly Melanoma

{Birth Defects}

Medications Taken During Pregnancy May Cause Birth Defects

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