



Hagens Berman Files Wrongful Death Lawsuit Against Merck for Suicide Allegedly Linked to Hair Loss Drug Propecia

By

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First-of-its-kind lawsuit claims Merck failed to warn against suicide risk and depression

LOS ANGELES, Mar 09, 2015 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Consumer-rights law firm Hagens Berman is representing surviving family members in a [wrongful death lawsuit against Merck & Co.](#) [MRK, -1.00%](#) one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, for allegedly failing to warn of dangerous side effects relating to suicidality and suicide ideation in its prescription hair loss drug Propecia. Hagens Berman is seeking information from others who have taken Propecia and experienced these side effects.

The first-of-its-kind lawsuit filed on Mar. 5, 2015, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, by the surviving spouse and two children of decedent John Pfaff, alleges that Propecia has known risks of depression and suicidal ideation, behavior and risk, but since the drug's inception in 1997 through 2010, Merck never included a warning about either risk on the Propecia label or in literature distributed with the drug. Merck eventually added depression to the drug's warning label in late 2010, but still, to this day, fails to warn of the risks of suicidal ideation and increased suicidal behavior. The lawsuit states that Merck omitted these risks, despite reports of depression and suicide ideation in clinical studies. Suicide ideation means "thinking about, considering, or planning for suicide" by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

If you have taken Propecia and are concerned about these side effects, contact Hagens Berman by emailing Propecia@hbsslaw.com or by calling 800-888-0088. Additional information about the investigation is available at www.hbsslaw.com/Propecia.

The Pfaff family lost a father and husband when John Pfaff took his own life. John was prescribed Propecia by his dermatologist in May 2008 and spiraled into a deep depression followed by suicide ideation that lingered even after he stopped taking the drug in 2012, the suit states.

"The Propecia-induced depression was followed by suicide ideation, and eventually, John took his own life. Because of Defendant Merck's strict negligence and breach of express and implied warranties in failing to warn of these dangerous side effects, they are liable for the injury to and wrongful death of John D. Pfaff," the complaint states.

"The family knows John lost his life to this drug. By trusting Merck and its statements, he found out the hard way just what harm Propecia could do to him and his family," said Hagens Berman partner Rob Carey. "John's family was robbed of a husband and father, all because of the disturbing silence of a drug company that surely knows of these side effects and its responsibility to alert users to them."

The lawsuit seeks wrongful death and survival action damages against Merck on behalf of John's surviving family. Merck

promoted the use of Propecia for treatment of male pattern hair loss as safe for its intended use even though Merck knew or should have known about these dangerous side effects and failed to warn users, according to the complaint.

Other drugs on the market with links to suicide have used warning labels outlining these side effects and the risks to the drug's users.

"Sadly, we know that John's family has not been the only one affected by this tragic negligence," Carey added. "We believe this is the first step in ending Merck's disregard. These risks need to be brought to light."

If you have taken Propecia and are concerned about these side effects, contact Hagens Berman to find out about your rights by emailing Propecia@hbsslaw.com or by calling 800-888-0088. Find out more about the [Propecia lawsuit](#).

[About Hagens Berman](#)

Hagens Berman Sobol Shapiro LLP is a consumer-rights class-action law firm with offices in nine cities. The firm has been named to the National Law Journal's Plaintiffs' Hot List eight times. More about the law firm and its successes can be found at www.hbsslaw.com. Follow the firm for updates and news at [@ClassActionLaw](#).

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