

Cancers Linked to Valsartan and What Each Diagnosis Means for a Lawsuit

How NDMA Contamination Connects to Blood Cancers, Liver Cancer, Digestive Cancers, and Other Diagnoses

Valsartan was contaminated with NDMA for years before the 2018 recall exposed the problem, and the range of cancers now linked to that contamination is wider than most patients realize. A diagnosis of myelodysplastic syndrome looks nothing like a diagnosis of liver cancer on the surface, and a patient with chronic myelomonocytic leukemia rarely connects that diagnosis to the same blood pressure medication that might cause stomach cancer in someone else. The connection across all of these diagnoses is the same contaminated drug, and understanding how each cancer type relates to NDMA exposure is central to evaluating any Valsartan claim.

NDMA, or [N-nitrosodimethylamine](#), is classified by the World Health Organization as a probable human carcinogen. It does not target a single organ or a single cancer pathway. Animal and human studies have associated NDMA exposure with cancers across the blood-forming system, the liver, the digestive tract, and several other organ systems, which is why the list of cancers connected to contaminated Valsartan reads as long and varied as it does. A [Valsartan cancer lawyer](#) evaluating a claim needs to understand not just that a cancer occurred, but how that specific cancer type fits into the broader scientific record connecting NDMA to disease.

What Valsartan Is and How NDMA Contamination Happened

Valsartan is a widely prescribed blood pressure medication used for decades to treat hypertension and heart failure. Because high blood pressure requires daily management, most patients took it continuously for years, trusting an FDA-approved medication would carry no hidden risk.

That trust was misplaced starting around 2012, when generic manufacturers, primarily Zhejiang Huahai Pharmaceuticals in China, changed their manufacturing process for Valsartan's active ingredient. The new process caused NDMA to form as an unintended byproduct, ending up in tablets patients swallowed daily for years before the FDA discovered the contamination in 2018.

Once ingested, NDMA is absorbed into the bloodstream and metabolized by the liver, a process that produces compounds capable of damaging DNA directly. That mechanism is why exposure has been linked to cancers across multiple organ systems, including the blood, liver, digestive tract, kidneys, and prostate, rather than to a single site of injury.

Blood and Bone Marrow Cancers Linked to Valsartan

Several of the most serious cancers connected to NDMA exposure originate in the blood and bone marrow rather than in a specific organ. These conditions affect the body's ability to produce healthy blood cells and often progress into more aggressive disease if left untreated, which makes early and accurate diagnosis particularly important in evaluating how a patient's Valsartan use timeline aligns with their illness.

Understanding which blood and bone marrow conditions have been linked to NDMA exposure helps patients and families recognize when a diagnosis may be connected to contaminated Valsartan rather than to unrelated risk factors. The conditions most frequently associated with NDMA exposure in this category include:

- **Myelodysplastic Syndrome:** A group of disorders in which the bone marrow fails to produce enough healthy blood cells, often progressing toward acute leukemia if untreated, and increasingly recognized in NDMA exposure research as a precursor condition with direct relevance to Valsartan claims.
- **Chronic Myelomonocytic Leukemia:** A rare blood cancer that shares features of both myelodysplastic syndrome and myeloproliferative disease, with NDMA exposure under increasing scrutiny as a contributing factor in patients with documented Valsartan use.
- **Leukemia:** A broader category of blood cancers affecting white blood cell production, with several subtypes appearing in NDMA exposure studies and FDA adverse event reports tied to contaminated Valsartan batches.
- **Hodgkin Lymphoma:** A cancer of the lymphatic system that has appeared in patients with documented long-term Valsartan use, with ongoing research examining the relationship between NDMA exposure and lymphatic cancers.
- **Bone Marrow Cancer:** A general category covering cancers that originate directly in the bone marrow tissue responsible for blood cell production, frequently overlapping with myelodysplastic syndrome and leukemia diagnoses in NDMA-related claims.

A Valsartan cancer lawyer evaluating a blood or bone marrow cancer claim works closely with oncologists and toxicologists to establish how the specific diagnosis aligns with documented NDMA exposure patterns, since these conditions often require more detailed medical causation analysis than solid tumor cancers.

Liver Cancers Linked to Valsartan

The liver is the organ most directly implicated in NDMA toxicity, because NDMA is metabolized primarily through liver enzymes and has been studied extensively for its hepatotoxic effects in both animal models and human exposure data. Liver cancers connected to contaminated Valsartan represent some of the most scientifically established claims in this litigation.

The liver cancers most consistently linked to NDMA exposure in Valsartan cases include:

- **Liver Cancer:** The most extensively documented cancer type in NDMA research, with decades of toxicology data establishing the liver as the primary target organ for nitrosamine compounds like NDMA.
- **Angiosarcoma of the Liver:** A rare and aggressive cancer affecting the blood vessels within the liver, historically associated with chemical exposures including vinyl chloride and, in more recent research, nitrosamine compounds such as NDMA.

The strength of the scientific record connecting NDMA to liver injury makes liver cancer cases among the most direct claims in Valsartan litigation, though the rarity of angiosarcoma in particular means these cases benefit significantly from experienced legal and medical evaluation to establish the connection clearly.

Digestive System Cancers Linked to Valsartan

Because Valsartan is taken orally and NDMA passes through the digestive tract before being absorbed and metabolized, the digestive system represents a major exposure pathway with a corresponding range of cancer diagnoses. Patients who took contaminated Valsartan for years had sustained direct contact between NDMA and the tissues lining the stomach, intestines, and pancreas.

The digestive system cancers most frequently connected to NDMA exposure in Valsartan claims include:

- **Stomach Cancer:** A cancer with strong documented associations to nitrosamine compounds including NDMA, supported by decades of research into dietary and pharmaceutical nitrosamine exposure.
- **Intestinal Cancer:** Cancers affecting the small and large intestine, where prolonged contact with NDMA during digestion has been studied as a contributing factor in patients with long-term Valsartan use.
- **Gastrointestinal Cancer:** A broader category encompassing cancers throughout the digestive tract, frequently used in claims where the specific tumor origin overlaps multiple gastrointestinal structures.
- **Pancreatic Cancer:** One of the more aggressive cancers linked to NDMA exposure, with research connecting nitrosamine compounds to pancreatic tissue damage over sustained exposure periods.

Digestive system cancers often require careful medical documentation to distinguish NDMA-related causation from other common risk factors such as diet, alcohol use, and genetic predisposition, which is why thorough medical record review is particularly important in building these specific claims.

Kidney and Prostate Cancer in Valsartan Claims

Kidney and prostate cancers round out the major categories of disease linked to contaminated Valsartan, and both involve organs that process or are affected by compounds circulating through the bloodstream after NDMA absorption. These cancers appear less frequently in Valsartan litigation than liver or digestive cancers, but they remain part of the documented exposure profile that toxicologists and medical experts evaluate in building claims.

- **Kidney Cancer:** The kidneys filter blood continuously, and sustained NDMA exposure through the bloodstream has been examined as a contributing factor in kidney tissue damage and tumor development among long-term Valsartan users.
- **Prostate Cancer:** Though less directly established in NDMA toxicology research than liver or digestive cancers, prostate cancer diagnoses in patients with significant Valsartan exposure histories are evaluated as part of the broader pattern of NDMA-related disease.

Patients with kidney or prostate cancer diagnoses following long-term Valsartan use should not assume their cancer falls outside the scope of this litigation simply because the connection to these organs is less widely publicized than the liver and digestive cancer claims.

How to Get Started With a Valsartan Cancer Claim

Getting started is a single step: contact a Valsartan cancer lawyer. Patients do not need pharmacy records, old pill bottles, organized medical files, or proof that their specific batch was contaminated before making that call. They only need to have taken Valsartan and received one of the diagnoses connected to NDMA exposure.

Once contacted, the [firm handles everything else](#). That includes tracking down pharmacy and medical records, identifying the manufacturer and lot number tied to the prescription, confirming the diagnosis timeline against known NDMA exposure patterns, and bringing in toxicologists and oncologists to build the causation case. None of that work falls on the patient or their family.

The only real risk in this process is waiting. Records become harder to recover the longer a patient waits to act, and filing deadlines vary by state. The first call costs nothing and starts that protection immediately.

Contact the Ferrell Law Group About a Valsartan Cancer Claim

The [Ferrell Law Group](#) represents Valsartan victims nationwide, with experience handling claims across the full range of cancers linked to NDMA contamination, including blood and bone marrow cancers, liver cancer, digestive system cancers, kidney cancer, and prostate cancer.

Patients diagnosed with any of these conditions after taking Valsartan, as well as families who have lost a loved one to a Valsartan-related cancer, are encouraged to [contact us](#) for a free consultation.

Our attorneys work with toxicologists, oncologists, and pharmaceutical experts to build the medical and scientific case connecting a specific diagnosis to contaminated Valsartan use. Cases are accepted on a contingency basis, meaning there are no legal fees of any kind unless we recover compensation on a client's behalf. With over 30 years of experience and hundreds of millions of dollars recovered for clients across the country, the Ferrell Law Group is ready to help Valsartan victims and their families understand what their claim may be worth.