



Jury Adds \$7.8 Million in J&J Punitive Damages



By LINDA A. JOHNSON AP Business Writer
February 28, 2013 (AP)

Recommend 0

0

Share 0

Share

Email

Comment

Print

Single Page

Text Size - / +

A New Jersey jury on Thursday ordered Johnson & Johnson to pay punitive damages of \$7.76 million to a former nurse who blames its vaginal mesh implant for years of "living hell" despite unsuccessful repair surgeries.

The award adds to the \$3.35 million in compensatory damages awarded by the state Superior Court jury on Monday, making a total of \$11.1 million in damages.

It's the first verdict in about 4,000 lawsuits filed against the giant health products maker based in New Brunswick, N.J.

Johnson & Johnson said the decision isn't supported by the evidence.

"We will vigorously pursue an appeal," Sheri Woodruff, a spokeswoman for the company's Ethicon surgical products subsidiary, said in a statement.

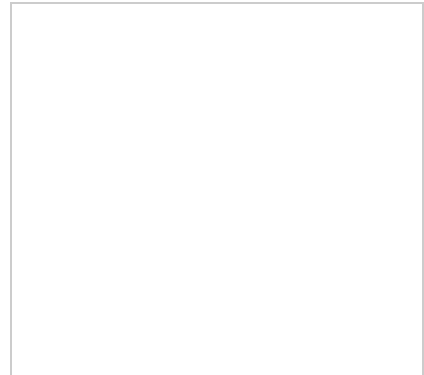
Ethicon sold its Prolift brand of implants from 2005 until 2012, when it pulled them from the market amid mounting lawsuits.

At least one plaintiff has won a lawsuit against one of the other 30-plus makers of the once-popular implants, which are used to lift sagging pelvic organs back into place to relieve pain and other problems.

The plaintiff, Linda Gross, 47, of Watertown, S.D., testified during the seven-week trial that she had undergone 18 revision surgeries — all without success — since having J&J's Prolift vaginal mesh device implanted in 2006. Severe pain and other complications forced the hospital hospice nurse to stop working.

"Linda Gross cannot turn back the clock and make her misery and pain disappear," her lead attorney, Adam Slater of the Mazie Slater firm in Roseland, N.J., said in a statement. "But she and countless victims like her can take some comfort in knowing that a jury ... decided ... that the corporation responsible for their suffering should be severely punished financially."

Introduced more than a decade ago, mesh implants, made of a porous synthetic or biologic material, were implanted in hundreds of thousands of women. They are tied to ligaments or bone to serve as a sort of sling to lift and support the organ involved.



MOST POPULAR

MOST RECENT



[Australia Offering \\$100K Jobs to U.S. Tourists](#)



[Suspect in Fatal Hit-Run Has DWI Past](#)



[Anthony Lives Off 'Kindness of Others'](#)



[Child 'Functionally Cured' of HIV](#)



[Sinkhole Victim's Brother Says Rescuers 'Could've Tried...'](#)



[Australia Offering \\$100K Jobs to U.S. Tourists](#)
1 hour, 29 minutes ago



[White House: Legalize Cellphone Unlocking](#)
2 hours, 32 minutes ago



[Politicians Top Forbes Billionaires List](#)
Today, 5:19 PM



[Immigration Reform Could Bring a Bigger Fence, But Miss Out...](#)
Today, 5:01 PM



[Jeb Bush's Book Rejects Path to Citizenship](#)
Today, 3:23 PM

The devices were touted as a safer, easier alternative to hysterectomy or other surgery to repair pelvic organ prolapse. The condition occurs when a pelvic organ — the bladder, uterus, vagina, bowel or rectum — droops as muscles supporting it weaken, usually due to childbirth. Aging, obesity and other factors can also trigger it.

The sagging organs can cause painful intercourse, lower backache, constipation and stress incontinence, or bladder leakage usually induced by coughing, sneezing, lifting heavy objects or exercising.

Mesh implants have helped many women. However, thousands of women who got them later complained of complications, including severe pain, infections and bleeding, and underwent follow-up surgeries to try to fix those problems.

Johnson & Johnson faces about 1,800 lawsuits filed in New Jersey, its home state, and about 2,200 filed in other courts. Altogether, the company and other makers of the implants face tens of thousands of lawsuits in state and federal courts around the U.S., according to attorneys for Gross.

The jury in Atlantic City awarded the compensatory damages after five days of deliberations, then heard additional evidence on Tuesday as both sides argued whether punitive damages should be imposed as well. The jury then deliberated from Tuesday afternoon through midday Thursday.

1 | 2 NEXT PAGE

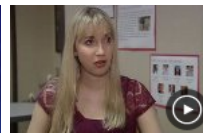
More From ABC News



Sonic Employee Denied Medical Care After Robbery



Miss Delaware Teen USA Resigns Amid Sex Video Controversy

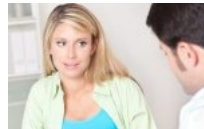


UNC Student Faces Expulsion After Alleged Rape

From Around the Web



'Teen Mom' Star Expecting Another Baby & It's Not Especially Good News (CafeMom)



What Does Having Lupus Mean (Health Central)



18 Things Your Feet Say About Your Health (Caring.com)

FROM AROUND THE WEB

5 Signs a Caregiver Is Stealing From You (Caring.com)

Fibromyalgia Syndrome: Mystery Pain Explained (Lifescript.com)

Giada De Laurentiis' Sexy Sheer Dress Leaves Nothing to the Imagination (PHOTO) (MamasLatinas)

6 Ways To Ruin Your Retirement (Investopedia)

Side Effects of Using Marijuana (Third Age)

MORE FROM ABC NEWS

Man Wins \$1.5M Over Profane Collection Calls

Gay Group Not Lovin' McDonald's Ad

Back to Work: Best Jobs for Older Workers

Alarming Rise in IRS Refund ID Thefts

Fed posts gloomy outlook for economy, jobs through 2009

How Well Does Paris Sell Burgers?

RELATED TOPICS: Johnson & Johnson, New Jersey

Follow @abc on Twitter, become a fan on Facebook

You Might Also Like...

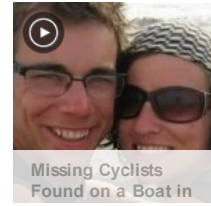
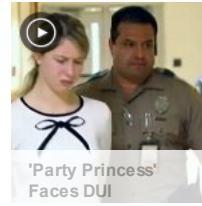


Photo Galleries



View: Florida Sinkhole Swallows Man US

ABC News Full Episodes



GMA | 03.04.2013 GMA 03/04: Newtown Parents to Join

WATCH MORE FULL EPISODES

Connect with Us



ABC NEWS NEWSLETTERS

E-mail Address

Select Newsletter

Breaking News

MORE NEWSLETTERS »

SIGN UP NOW

Man Cheats Credit Score

1 simple trick & my credit score jumped 217 pts. Banks hate this!
www.thecreditsolutionprogram.com

Screaming Penny Stocks

Our Next Penny Stock Pick will Rock Your World! Don't Delay, Read More.
ImpressivePennyStocks.com

1 Tip to Lose Stomach Fat

This interesting article shows how coffee bean fights stomach fat.
www.ConsumerSavingToday.com

2013 Market Crash?

Analyst Dennis Slothower foresaw 2008 collapse; issues new warning
StealthStocksOnline.com

Business Funding

Largest Network of Investors, Venture Capital, Loans. Online Now.
www.funded.com

Public Arrest Records

(Recommended) 1) Enter Name, State. 2) Access Full Background Checks.
www.InstantCheckmate.com

US Postal Jobs (Hiring)

Salary Starting is \$51,000 a Year. No Experience Necessary. Start Now!
www.PostalExam473.com

Recommend 0

Email

Print

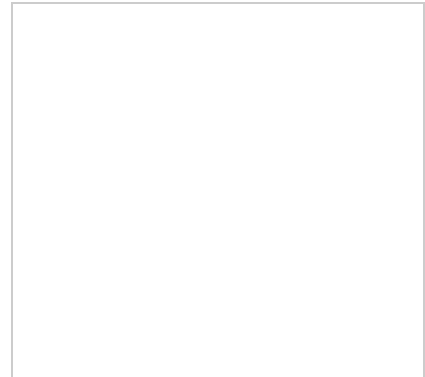
Share

Comment & Contribute

Do you have more information about this topic? If so, please [click here](#) to contact the editors of ABC News.

Empty text input box for user comments.

POST YOUR COMMENT



Today in ABC News

[ABC News Home »](#)



Taxpayers' Money Spent on Portraits



Man Tries to Infiltrate Meeting of Cardinals in Rome



Baby Gorillas Raised By Humans at Cincinnati Zoo



External links are provided for reference purposes. ABC News is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites. Copyright © 2013 ABC News Internet Ventures. Yahoo! - ABC News Network

Quotes delayed 15 minutes for NASDAQ. 20 minutes for NYSE and AMEX. Market Data provided by Interactive Data. Terms & Conditions. Powered and implemented by Interactive Data Managed Solutions

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Sections

- [U.S.](#)
- [World](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [Weird News](#)
- [Investigative](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Money](#)
- [Technology](#)
- [Travel](#)
- [Recipes](#)
- [News Topics](#)

Shows

- [NY Med](#)
- [Good Morning America](#)
- [World News with Diane Sawyer](#)
- [Nightline](#)
- [This Week with George Stephanopoulos](#)
- [20/20](#)
- [Primetime](#)
- [What Would You Do?](#)
- [Live Streaming Coverage](#)
- [ABC.com](#)

Tools

- [iPad App](#)
- [Register](#)
- [Sign In](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [Emails & News Alerts](#)
- [Message Boards](#)
- [RSS Headlines](#)

About

- [Contact Us](#)
- [Feedback](#)
- [Advertising](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Interest-Based Ads](#)
- [Terms of Use](#)
- [ABC News Store](#)
- [Site Map](#)
- [Site Index](#)
- [Authors List](#)
- [ABC News | Univision](#)