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Attorney General

Attorney General Becerra Secures nearly \$344 Million Judgment Against Johnson & Johnson for Endangering Patients through Deceptive Marketing of Pelvic Mesh Products

Press Release / *Attorney General Becerra Secures nearly \$344 Million Judgment Against Johnson & Johnson*

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California Department of Justice first in nation to secure groundbreaking court ruling against Johnson & Johnson

LOS ANGELES – California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today secured a Superior Court judgment against Johnson & Johnson for false and deceptive marketing of its pelvic mesh products for women. The California Department of Justice sued Johnson & Johnson in May 2016 after a years-long multistate investigation revealed the company had neglected to inform both patients and doctors of possible severe complications from the products and misrepresented the frequency and severity of risks the products posed.

The Department of Justice represented the people of California in a nine-week trial that began July 15, 2019. San Diego Superior Court Judge Eddie Sturgeon issued the judgment requiring Johnson & Johnson to pay \$343.99 million in penalties. Additional injunctive terms may be added after further briefing. Today's judgment marks the first time a court of law has issued findings of fact and ruled that Johnson & Johnson did indeed engage in illegal false and deceptive business practices concerning its pelvic mesh products.

"Johnson & Johnson intentionally concealed the risks of its pelvic mesh implant devices. It robbed women and their doctors of their ability to make informed decisions about whether to permanently implant the products in patients' bodies," **said Attorney General Becerra**. "Johnson & Johnson knew the danger of its mesh products but put profits ahead of the health of millions of women. Today we achieved justice for the women and families forever scarred by Johnson & Johnson's dishonesty."

The court today affirmed that Johnson & Johnson knew about the potential risks and side effects of their pelvic mesh products prior to their launch. Yet, the company omitted that information from the products' instructions for use and omitted and misrepresented the risks in educational and marketing materials provided to doctors and patients. The pelvic mesh products are permanent surgical implants designed to treat stress urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse in women. The lawsuit alleged that Johnson & Johnson misrepresented the safety of these products by concealing and misleading consumers about the possibility of serious and irreversible complications caused by mesh, including permanent pain with intercourse, loss of sexual function, chronic pain, permanent urinary or defecatory dysfunction, and potentially devastating impact on overall quality of life.

From 2008 to 2014, Johnson & Johnson sold more than 470,000 pelvic mesh products nationally, including more than 30,000 in California. Worldwide, more than 2 million women have had these mesh products implanted in their bodies.

The court affirmed that Johnson & Johnson and its subsidiaries Ethicon Inc. and Ethicon US LLC, violated California’s Unfair Competition Law and False Advertising Law.

Johnson & Johnson has faced over 35,000 personal injury lawsuits related to its pelvic mesh products. It has settled claims similar to those brought by Attorney General Becerra with the state of Washington for \$9.9 million and with a coalition of 42 other states for \$117 million.

A copy of the judgment can be found [here](#).

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