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Philadelphia jury orders J&J to pay \$80 million to Media woman injured by vaginal mesh

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A subsidiary of pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson must pay \$80 million to a suburban Philadelphia woman who was injured by vaginal mesh implant to treat pelvic organ prolapse. The verdict included \$50 million in punitive damages.

Patricia Mesigian, 75, had Ethicon's Prolift mesh implanted in 2008. The mesh eroded and caused her pelvic pain, infection, inflammation, and scar tissue, according to the suit. A series of follow-up

surgeries failed to help. A Philadelphia jury deliberated for two days before finding the Prolift device was defective and that Johnson & Johnson failed to provide adequate warning of its risks.

“In this largest transvaginal compensatory jury verdict to date, this jury resoundingly found that Johnson & Johnson terribly injured another one of thousands of women implanted with its defective transvaginal mesh device, recognizing not only the severity of the injury but the abhorrence of the conduct,” Thomas R. Kline, trial attorney for Mesigian, said in an emailed statement Saturday. The suit is the second against J&J’s Ethicon in less than a month to result in a massive damage award to a mesh plaintiff. In April, a jury in Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas awarded a record \$120 million to an Altoona woman who had mesh implanted to treat incontinence. The company said it would appeal the verdicts.

“While Ethicon empathizes with women who experience medical complications, this verdict and the damages awarded are inconsistent with the science and Ethicon’s actions,” said the company’s spokeswoman, Mindy Tinsley. “The jury was not permitted to hear critical evidence related to the FDA’s review and classification of these devices, which we believe significantly influenced the verdict and punitive award in this case.”

“Pelvic mesh” has become one of the biggest mass torts in U.S. history. Medical device makers are paying nearly \$8 billion to settle the claims of more than 100,000 women who suffered complications.