

Increasing Reports of Death and Serious Injury Linked to YAZ® Birth Control Product

In the past several months an ever increasing number of lawsuits filed against Bayer have revealed evidence that links the birth control product YAZ to more than 40 deaths and other serious complications including kidney disease, blood clots, heart attacks, strokes, and deep vein thrombosis. Additionally, YAZ has been implicated in charges of deceptive marketing practices, in which it is alleged that the product was improperly marketed and promoted as a remedy for premenstrual syndrome. According to the FDA, YAZ has only been approved for birth control, and it is not approved as a premenstrual syndrome medication. YAZ was first marketed by Bayer Corp. in 2006. In the U.S, it is only approved for the following:

Pregnancy prevention

The treatment of the emotional and physical symptoms of premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD). (While they have some symptoms in common, PMDD and premenstrual syndrome (PMS) are very different disorders. Yaz is not approved as a treatment for PMS.) The treatment of moderate acne in women who desire an oral contraceptive for birth control.

YAZ and Yasmin, which are both manufactured by Bayer, are combined oral contraceptives that contain ethinyl estradiol, long used in oral contraceptives, and drospirenone, a new type of progestin that is not used in any other birth control pills approved in the United States. Drospirenone can increase blood potassium levels, potentially resulting in a condition known as hyperkalemia, which is known to disrupt heart rhythms and potentially lead to death. Individuals who have pre-existing kidney, liver and adrenal disease could be particularly susceptible.

Bayer's YAZ campaign not only made false claims about the benefits of the drug, it also downplayed the very serious side effects - including life-threatening blood clots - known to be associated with YAZ. Because of Bayer's false advertising, millions of women took YAZ without being fully aware of the drug's significant side effects and health risks. In October 2008, the FDA issued a warning letter to Bayer over the content of two Yaz TV commercials the agency said were misleading. One of the commercials featured the song "Good Bye to You". Women were seen releasing balloons labeled with PMS-like symptoms, including "irritability," "moodiness" and "bloating." The commercial suggested women were saying "goodbye" to their symptoms and were now symptom-free because of YAZ.

In the second spot, women were heard and seen singing "We're not gonna take it" and kicking, punching and pushing balloons labeled with the same type of symptoms, usually associated with PMS. The FDA said that the Bayer TV ads implied that Yaz was approved to treat the symptoms of PMS. Drug makers are legally prohibited from promoting unapproved uses of medications.

Yasmin side effects include:

- blood clots in the legs (DVT)
- blood clots in the lungs (Pulmonary embolism)
- stroke
- heart attack

- gall bladder disease
- pancreatitis

Yaz Blood Clots

Yaz blood clot problems including DVT and PE is a serious Yaz side effect reported by women using this fourth-generation birth control pill. Many women with no family history of blood clots have suffered from life threatening injuries involving clots. The type of hormones in birth control pills can increase the risk of developing blood clots which can lead to serious problems especially if they are not diagnosed early. After having a blood clot many women are then faced with life-changing side effects including: being on blood thinners, pain in the area of the clot, future pregnancy problems, and increased risk of developing another clot.

Yaz Stroke

Yaz strokes are serious Yaz side effects reported by women using this fourth-generation contraceptive. There are two main types of strokes: ischemic stroke (caused by blockage) and hemorrhagic stroke (caused by bleeding). Women who are otherwise healthy with no prior stroke problems have experienced life threatening events involving a stroke where no other health issues exist. One of the serious risks with Yaz birth control and other fourth-generation contraceptives is the increased chance of developing a blood clot which can lead to a stroke or heart attack. After having a stroke many women are then faced with life-changing side effects including: permanent loss of movement, difficulty communicating, and permanent loss of brain functions.