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**HEADLINE:** Plaintiffs' lawyers investigating contraceptive-gallbladder link

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**BODY:**

In addition to blood clotting injuries related to the contraceptive Yaz/Yasmin, plaintiffs' attorneys are investigating claims that the fourth generation birth control pills also cause gallbladder problems.

The litigation has been consolidated in multi-district litigation in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio under Judge David Herndon.

The suits, which number several hundred, allege that Bayer failed to warn about increased risks caused by the drug's progestin component, drospirenone.

So far the suits have focused on injuries that involve blot clots, such as deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolisms, heart attacks and strokes.

However, plaintiffs' attorneys have found that a large number of plaintiffs have also suffered gallbladder problems.

"We didn't see this issue. ... It's baffling. We're going to be investigating it very closely. We're going to be working very closely with experts to try to get to the bottom of this," said Janet Abaray, a managing shareholder of **Burg Simpson** Eldredge Hersh in Cincinnati, which represents hundreds of plaintiffs.

Abaray, who estimates that one-third of the plaintiffs have suffered from gallbladder disease, said that gallbladder problems were unusual in other birth control cases. Abaray serves as co-lead counsel in the Ortho-Evra (contraceptive patch) litigation.

She noted that the medical literature on this issue is scant, but that in Bayer's early clinical trials four women out of 432 had their gallbladders removed.

Abaray said one percent is a high percentage for such a serious injury.

"This is something taken by millions of women. If 10 million take it, and 1 in 100 had to remove their gallbladder, those are ferocious numbers," she said.

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