ChronicleHerald.ca

CANADA

Opinions News

Business

Sports

TODAY'S E-PAPER SUBSCRIBE E-FLYERS OBITUARIES HOROSCOPE SUDOKU CROSSWORD CONTESTS CONTACT

Arts & Life

Community

Wheels

**JobsPress** 

Classified

Archive



# Class action suit linking drugs, cancer approved

B.C. Supreme Court calls group approach best route to justice By WENDY COX The Canadian Press Sat, Aug 6 - 4:55 AM

VANCOUVER — A major drug company has lost its effort to derail a Canadian classaction lawsuit linking two of its hormone replacement drugs to higher rates of breast

A B.C. Supreme Court judge ruled Thursday that the class action can be certified and women from British Columbia and other provinces can be represented in their efforts to get compensation.

A lawyer for the drug maker, Wyeth Canada, which has been bought by drug company Pfizer, had argued there were too many individual circumstances among claimants and lumping them together into a class-action case would be unwieldy.

But Justice Miriam Gropper disagreed.

"In spite of there being a number of individual issues, there will be substantial benefits with respect to access to justice and judicial economy achieved through a common issues trial," she wrote.

"Individual litigation would not be economically viable for most of the class members and a class proceeding is the most effective means of providing access to justice."

Efforts to launch the class-action suit began in 2006. David Klein, a lawyer representing the women, said he expects the claimants to eventually include thousands of women who took the drugs between 1977 and 2003.

The women claim they got breast cancer after taking the medications to ease symptoms of menopause, such as hot flashes and night sweats.

But a major study published in 2002 linked the drugs to higher rates of heart attack, stroke and cancer in some cases.

Dianna Stanway, of Sechelt, B.C., is the central claimant in the case. She claims she took one of the drugs for seven years but became concerned after hearing the reports linking it to breast cancer.

Two months after she quit using the drug, she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

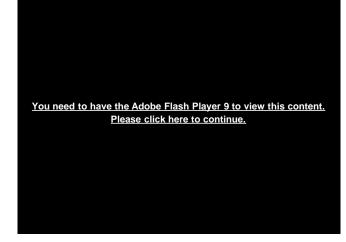
Stanway's lawyers argue Wyeth-Ayerst International and its Canadian subsidiary acted negligently because they did not warn doctors and patients that the hormone replacement drugs Premarin and Premplus might be dangerous.

Little or no testing on the efficacy or safety of the drugs was done by the drug manufacturer, the court documents claim.

"The defendants repeatedly and actively portrayed these drugs as being effective at providing a host of health benefits even though research to support such claims was limited or non-existent or suggested otherwise," the claim said.

None of the accusations have been proven in court.

# LOGIN/REGISTER



# PHOTO GALLERIES





Week in Pictures July31-Aug6



Invitational golf tournament

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Obituaries | Births | Cards | InMemoriams | Milestones

# Online Programs

Earn Your Degree Online Through One of Canada's Top Universities.

# **Advanced Cancer Treatment**

Alternative Treatment Options as of August 2011. Call: 1-888-447-7357

www.Issels.com

# Canadian Drugs Online

Brand & Generic Medication for Less From Your Trusted Canada Pharmacy!

www.CanadaDrugs.com



AdChoices ▷

# TODAY'S CANADA STORIES

CIA had eve on Canada

Trip aims to boost Brazil ties

Flaherty confident market meltdown will be averted

In a statement, Pfizer said hormone therapy remains an "important treatment option" for women suffering severe side effects of menopause.

"This procedural ruling is not a decision on the merits of the case, which the plaintiff ultimately must prove at trial," the company said.

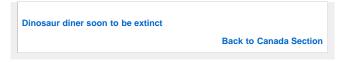
"The company will vigorously defend this case, which still faces procedural challenges before it can go to trial."

The statement did not clarify whether that means Pfizer will appeal Gropper's Thursday ruling and a company spokesman declined further comment.

The company maintains it acted responsibly by conducting more than 180 studies on hormone therapy's benefits and risks and that the labels on the medication accurately portray those.

However, the lawsuit argues that the 2002 Women's Health Initiative Study by the United States National Institutes of Health concluded there was a connection between hormone therapy and an increase in breast cancer.





- RECOMMENDED EMAILED COMMENTED VIEWED 1. Northern lights heading south (8,423 views)
  - 2. Short-handed club gets help from Marchand (6,964 views)
  - 3. ACROSS NOVA SCOTIA (5,831 views)
  - 4. Halifax has list of buildings to be tested for asbestos (5,045 views)
  - 5. SPORTS IN BRIEF (5,034 views)
  - 6. Man found dead next to overturned boat in Pictou County (4,645 views)
  - 7. CIA had eye on Canada (4,637 views)
  - 8. He's making a difference, already (4,502 views)
  - 9. Markets tumble (4,484 views)
  - 10. ASTROLOGICAL FORECAST (3,990 views)

# ChronicleHerald.ca

#### NEWS -Front Page

- -Metro
- -Nova Scotia
- -Canada
- -World -Business
- -Sports
- -Arts & Life
- -Travel
- -Books
- -Religion
- -Science -The Nova Scotian
- COMMUNITY
- -Community News
- -NS Communities

#### -Sports Columns -Arts & Life Columns

-News Columns

-Business Columns

**OPINIONS** 

-Columnists

-Editorials

- -Community Blogs
- -Community Reviews
- -MacKinnon Cartoon

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

- -Obituaries
- -Births -Cards
- -InMemoriams
- -Milestones
- -Contact us to place
- an Announcement

#### MULTIMEDIA

- -Photos
- -Videos
- -Community Photos

# JOBSPRESS

- -JobsPress
- -Advertising -Post a Job

#### WHEELS

- -Wheels
- -Search

-Sell Your Vehicle

# NEWSPAPER -Today's E-Paper -Classifieds

- -Place a Classified Ad
- -Subscribe
- -NiE -Professional Directory
- -South Shore Calendar

# ABOUT THE HERALD

- -About Us
- -Contact Us
- -Work @ The Herald
- -F.A.Q
- -Library Services
- -Privacy Policy
- -Terms of Use

#### ADVERTISING

- -Advertising Sales -Web Advertising
- -Media Kits, Etc.
- -Place a Classified Ad
- -Pay Your Account

# CLIENTS

# -Print Upload

- -Web Upload
- -Real Estate Portal
- -Media Kits, Etc.

# **FUN & GAMES**

- -Crossword
- -Comics

### USEFUL INFORMATION -E-Flyers

- -Eye on Nova Scotia
- -N.S. Highway Cams
- -Horoscope
- -Lotteries
- -Tides -Weather
- -Movie Times
- -What's Happening -Mayflower TV Guide
- -Herald Archive

- -Sudoku
- -Contests

**BACK TO TOP** 

# © 2011 The Halifax Herald Limited