

## \$2,250,000 Jury Verdict for Medication-Induced Liver Failure: Malpractice/Wrongful Death

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Van Nosedall v. Sergeant: A Middlesex County jury deliberated for one hour on June 29 before awarding \$2.2 million to the widow of a man whose medication allegedly caused liver failure.

Wesley Van Nosedall of Old Bridge began taking acetaminophen with codeine for his back pain as prescribed by his doctor, John Sergeant, in September of 1983, according to Van Nosedall's attorney, from Eichen Crutchlow Zaslow, LLP. Van Nosedall took up to seven pills daily, The Firm says. He adds that between 1983 and February of 1991, when Van Nosedall stopped taking the medication, his elevated liver enzymes, an asymptomatic condition, were aggravated. He died on April 14, 1991, at age 59, of acetaminophen induced liver failure.

Van Nosedall's widow, Dorothy, filed suit in July 1992. The trial, before Superior Court Judge George Nicola, lasted for four days.

The Plaintiff's expert witness, Paul LeWinter, an internist at Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield, showed that elevated liver enzymes were, at best, not helped by the acetaminophen prescription.

Sergeant was represented by Thomas Chansky of Lynch Martin in North Brunswick, who did not return a telephone message left at his office.

By Deseree Graham

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