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J&J unit ordered to pay \$57.1M to Pa. woman in pelvic mesh suit

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A Philadelphia jury on Thursday ordered a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson to pay \$57.1 million in damages to a Pennsylvania woman who was left chronically incontinent and in constant pain after receiving defective pelvic mesh implants.

Ella Ebaugh, 51, of York County, received two implants of the [Ethicon](http://www.ethicon.com/) (<http://www.ethicon.com/>) devices, which later eroded into her urethra, said her attorney, Kila Baldwin of [Kline & Specter](https://www.klinespecter.com/) (<https://www.klinespecter.com/>). Surgeons operated three times to remove the devices.

The Common Pleas Court verdict is the fifth, and largest yet, awarded in a pelvic mesh suit, Baldwin said. It included \$50 million in punitive damages. In December 2015, an Indiana woman was [awarded \\$12.5 million](http://www.philly.com/philly/business/20151223_Philadelphia_jury_awards_woman_12.5_million_in_damages_from_J) (http://www.philly.com/philly/business/20151223_Philadelphia_jury_awards_woman_12.5_million_in_damages_from_J) in February 2016, a New Jersey woman received a \$13.5 million award; in April 2017, a [Cinnaminson woman was awarded \\$20 million](http://www.philly.com/philly/business/law/Jury-awards-20-million-to-woman-in-pelvic-mesh-trial.html); (<http://www.philly.com/philly/business/law/Jury-awards-20-million-to-woman-in-pelvic-mesh-trial.html>) and in June, a Pennsylvania woman received \$2.1 million.

A spokeswoman for Ethicon said the company would appeal the verdict.

“We believe the evidence showed Ethicon’s TVT and TVT-Secur devices were properly designed, Ethicon acted appropriately and responsibly in the research, development and marketing of the products, and the products were not the cause of the plaintiff’s continuing medical problems,” said Kristen Wallace.

Thousands of women are believed to have been implanted with the devices, said Baldwin, who tried the case with Tracie Palmer and Elia Robertson, also of Kline & Specter.

Evidence introduced during the trial asserted J&J intentionally manipulated the literature regarding problems with the products and withheld information about complications and injuries from doctors, Baldwin said.

“I am pleased the jury recognized the reckless conduct of Johnson & Johnson,” Baldwin said, “and I hope the company takes notice of this verdict and the other verdicts in Philadelphia and amends its practices accordingly so as not to hurt other women.”

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