

First German Lawsuit Brought Against BioNTech Over COVID-19 Vaccine Side Effects

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Biotech firm BioNTech is facing a lawsuit filed by a German woman over side effects she suffered after receiving its mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccine. The woman, a healthcare worker whose identity remains private under German privacy laws, is claiming at least €150,000 (\$164,000) in damages for bodily harm and compensation for material damage. She reports experiencing upper-body pain, swollen extremities, fatigue, and sleeping disorders after receiving the vaccine. The case, the first of potentially hundreds in Germany, is being heard by the regional court in Hamburg.

The woman's lawyer says he intends to challenge the positive risk-benefit analysis given to the BioNTech injection by European Union (EU) regulators and German vaccine assessment bodies. Under German pharmaceutical law, vaccine manufacturers are only liable for damages if it can be shown that the shots cause disproportionate harm relative to their claimed benefits, or if labeling information is incorrect.

BioNTech, which developed its vaccine with Pfizer and holds the marketing authorization for the product in Germany, predictably claims that the woman's case lacks merit. The position of the European Medicines Agency is that the BioNTech vaccine has a very low incidence of side effects. A [recent study](#) sharply contradicts this, however, confirming that mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are associated with more serious harms than originally thought.

As some of the EU's bulk purchase agreements with COVID-19 vaccine makers reportedly include liability waivers, the BioNTech lawsuit raises important questions regarding responsibility for legal costs and compensation. Observers suggest that in cases brought in EU countries, governments, and ultimately therefore taxpayers, could be forced to bear the payment of any damages.

A growing number of lawsuits

The German case is one of a growing number of COVID-19 vaccine lawsuits being filed around the world.

In the UK around 90 families are said to be pursuing [legal action against vaccine maker AstraZeneca](#). Many of the plaintiffs say the firm's COVID-19 vaccine caused them to develop vaccine-induced thrombotic thrombocytopenia, a condition that can cause deadly blood clots. Others developed Guillan-Barre syndrome, which can result in paralysis. Some have even had limbs amputated.

The UK lawsuit currently involves over two dozen fatalities, some of whom were aged as young as 18-years-old. The compensation bill for British victims killed or maimed by the AstraZeneca vaccine could theoretically exceed £1 billion (\$1.28 billion). But as the UK government's contract with the firm included an indemnity clause, the final bill will end up being footed by taxpayers.

A COVID-19 vaccine injury lawsuit has also been filed in [Australia](#). This case reportedly has 500 members and is seeking redress for citizens left injured or bereaved by COVID-19 vaccines. The Australian government, its drug regulatory agency and its department of health are all named as parties to the class action, as also are a number of senior public servants.

The lead claimants in the Australian case include a man who developed a severe heart condition after receiving the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, another who developed encephalomyelitis (inflammation in the brain and spinal cord) following the AstraZeneca vaccine, and a third who developed cognitive impairment and chronic fatigue after having the Moderna vaccine.

Additional countries in which cases have recently been filed include Italy, [Canada](#), and the [United States](#). Lawsuits in further countries are expected to follow.

With [total worldwide revenue](#) from COVID-19 vaccines reaching \$64.4 billion in 2021 and \$60.9 billion in 2022, the maximizing of corporate profits has resulted in widespread human suffering. With death and injury tolls continuing to mount, vaccine manufacturers and their stakeholders must be called to account.

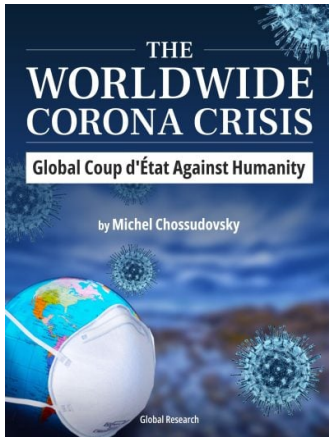
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