

# Testimony set to begin in pregnancy drug case

January 8 2013, by Denise Lavoie

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The Melnick sisters, who are suing Eli Lilly and Co. alleging that a synthetic estrogen known as DES caused them all to get breast cancer, pose at their hotel in Boston, Monday evening, Jan. 7, 2013. Testimony is set to begin in their federal lawsuit against the drug maker on Tuesday Jan. 8th. From left are Francine Melnick, Andrea Andrews, Donna McNeely and Michele Fecho. (AP Photo/Charles Krupa)

(AP)—Testimony is set to begin in a federal lawsuit brought by four sisters who believe their breast cancer was caused by a drug their mother took during pregnancy in the 1950s.

The case involves a [synthetic estrogen](#) known as DES, prescribed to millions of pregnant women between the late 1930s and early 1970s to prevent miscarriages, premature births and other problems. Studies later showed the drug did not prevent miscarriages.

The Melnick sisters, who grew up in Tresckow, Penn., say they all developed breast cancer in their 40s after their mother took DES while pregnant. They say their mother did not take DES while pregnant with a fifth sister, and that sister has not developed [breast cancer](#). They are seeking unspecified damages.

Opening statements and testimony are expected Tuesday.

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