

# British court ruling backs patent protecting Lilly's Alimta

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Eli Lilly received some European legal backing for its top product, the lung cancer treatment Alimta, on Thursday when a British court upheld a patent protecting a vitamin regimen administered with the drug.

Shares of the Indianapolis drugmaker climbing in premarket trading.

The court ruled that Lilly's vitamin regimen patent would be indirectly infringed by a generic competitor. The vitamin patent covers the administration of [folic acid](#) and vitamin B12 before and during treatment.

Lilly's patent protecting Alimta's chemical makeup expires at the end of the year in several European markets, but Thursday's court decision makes it likelier that protection for the vitamin regimen will last through June 2021, a spokeswoman said.

Alimta brought in \$2.79 billion in sales globally last year as Indianapolis-based Eli Lilly and Co.'s top-selling product. Regulators have approved the drug to treat patients with forms of advanced, non-small cell [lung cancer](#) and malignant pleural mesothelioma, a type of cancer linked to asbestos exposure.

Lilly shares were up \$1.93 to \$84.19 before markets opened Thursday. The stock had climbed about 19 percent so far this year, as of Wednesday.

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