

Legal cases for soft-tissue fillers mainly involve physicians

September 29 2015



(HealthDay)—Legal cases relating to soft-tissue filler most often involve physicians, frequently relating to a non-physician performing the procedure, according to a research letter published in the October issue of the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*.

Navid Ezra, M.D., from the Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis, and colleagues examined a legal database for litigation and disciplinary actions involving soft-tissue fillers. They identified 24 legal documents: 19 cases and five disciplinary actions, which likely underrepresents the true incidence of legal events.

The researchers found that physicians were named as defendants in 13 of the 19 cases; six of the seven cases that named non-physicians

involved a substance other than the reported filler being injected. Half of the legal actions resulted from a non-physician performing the procedure. The highest proportion of litigation was seen for dermatologists and plastic surgeons (17 percent for each). Most disciplinary actions reprimanded physicians for not being present while a non-physician employee performed the procedure; physicians were functioning as medical directors of medical spas in three of the five reprimands. Granuloma formation or other autoimmune reaction was the most common injury that triggered litigation. The soft tissue filler most frequently associated with litigation was Zyderm.

"The medico-legal culture is one where physicians are responsible for their physician extenders," the authors write. "Further research should evaluate whether the presence of a [physician](#) affects rate of developing complications."

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Citation: Legal cases for soft-tissue fillers mainly involve physicians (2015, September 29)
retrieved 6 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-09-legal-cases-soft-tissue-fillers-involve.html>

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