

Providence patients' lawsuit claims negligence over potential exposure to hepatitis B and C, HIV

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Four people who were potentially exposed to hepatitis B and C and HIV during surgeries at a Portland-area hospital have filed a class action

lawsuit against Providence, the medical facility and an anesthesiology group claiming their negligence has caused pain, shock and anxiety.

The four patients from Clackamas County, identified in the [lawsuit](#) by their initials, underwent surgeries at Providence Willamette Falls Medical Center in Oregon City between March 2022 and February 2024, the lawsuit said. On July 11, Providence sent notices to about 2,200 patients saying the physician who administered anesthesia "failed to adhere to [infection](#) control procedures," which exposed patients to hepatitis and HIV.

Providence encouraged the patients to be tested for the deadly viruses, "and stated that Defendant Providence 'will reach out to discuss test results and next steps' only 'if a patient tests positive.' "

The statement did not identify the physician, who worked with the Oregon Anesthesiology Group. The physician was fired following an investigation, the lawsuit said.

Phone messages left at the Providence hospital and the anesthesiology group seeking comment were not immediately returned.

Hepatitis B can cause [liver damage](#), cirrhosis, [liver cancer](#) and possibly death. Hepatitis C is a blood-borne viral infection of the liver, and HIV is a virus that attacks the body's immune system.

The lawsuit said potential exposure to these infections have caused the the patients "pain, suffering, shock, horror, anguish, grief, anxiety, nervousness, embarrassment, humiliation, loss of enjoyment of life, and other general and special damages in an amount to be proven at trial."

They have been "forced to incur the expense, inconvenience, and distraction from everyday activities due to the worry and stress" over the

possible infection, the lawsuit said.

One patient was tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV and while the tests came back negative, she has experienced symptoms that made her concerned that she may have one of the viruses. She must be tested again in the near future, the lawsuit said.

"Until she receives the new test results, Plaintiff D.C. cannot have any certainty about whether she has been exposed to hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or HIV," the lawsuit said. "And even after she receives her test results, there is no guarantee Plaintiff D.C. is safe from these infections given the possibility of false negative [test](#) results."

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