Lawsuit Alleges Safer Version of HIV Med Tenofovir Withheld

Tenofovir disoproxil fumarate is found in Truvada, Viread, Atripla, Complera and Stribild.

April 29, 2019 By Trent Straube

More than 50 people are listed as plaintiffs in a lawsuit against Gilead Sciences that alleges that the pharmaceutical giant not only downplayed the health risks of the drug tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF) but also withheld a safer version of the med. TDF is found in Truvada, Viread, Atripla, Complera and Stribild.

As the San Mateo Daily Journal reports, the lawsuit was filed by attorney Jack Rutherford in San Mateo County Superior Court.

Rutherford alleges that Gilead withheld the newer version — tenofovir alafenamide fumarate (TAF) — for nearly a decade so it could extend its patents and that by doing so, Gilead exposed people to high risks of kidney and bone problems.

“They had two options available, and for business purposes, in order to make more money, they essentially went with the less safe, less effective version,” Rutherford told the newspaper.

In an emailed statement included in the article, Gilead stressed that it prioritizes patient safety and will challenge the lawsuit.

“Ongoing collaboration with, and input from, the medical and advocacy communities have always played a key role in helping inform our development programs and decisions,” read the Gilead statement. “Patient safety is of foremost importance to us.”

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