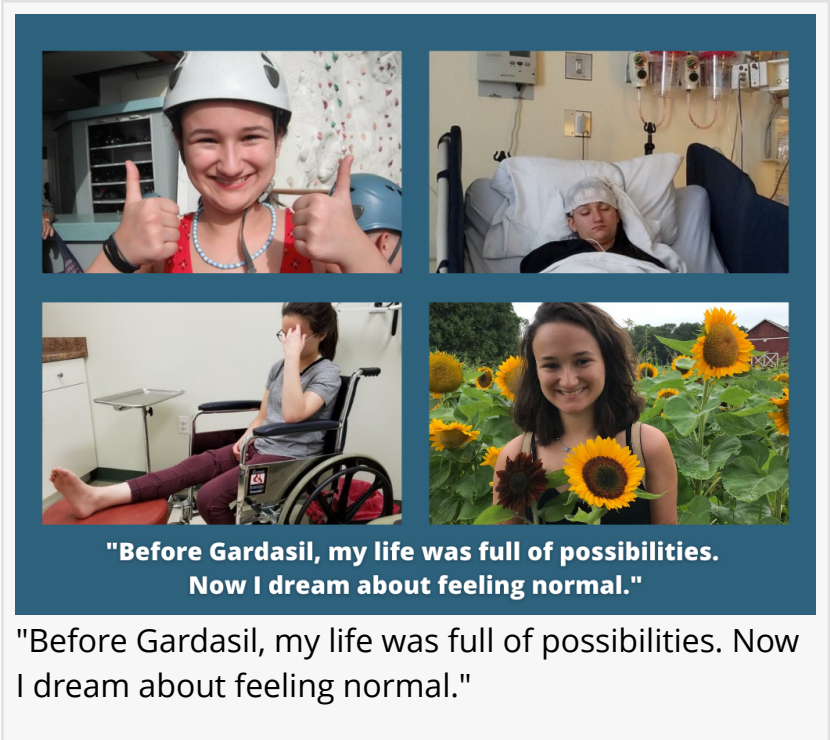


# Mass. Woman Alleges Gardasil Vaccine Caused Periodic Paralysis

*A Western Massachusetts woman alleges Gardasil caused Hypokalemic Periodic Paralysis (HOKPP) and Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS).*

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, January 21, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Gardasil lawyers from Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman have filed a lawsuit on behalf of a Western Massachusetts woman who developed Hypokalemic Periodic Paralysis (HOKPP), Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS), and other injuries after receiving the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine.



Plaintiff Skylee Butler's lawsuit alleges

Merck & Co., Inc. and subsidiary Merck Sharp & Dohme knowingly sold and falsely promoted Gardasil knowing that, if consumers were fully informed about Gardasil's risks and dubious benefits, almost no one would consent to receive the HPV vaccine. Attorneys Bijan Esfandiari,

Nicole Maldonado, Michael L. Baum, Monique Alarcon, and co-counsel Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. represent Butler in her case.

“

Merck told doctors that women who don't receive the vaccine will go on to develop cancer even though there isn't a single study that proves Gardasil prevents cancer.”

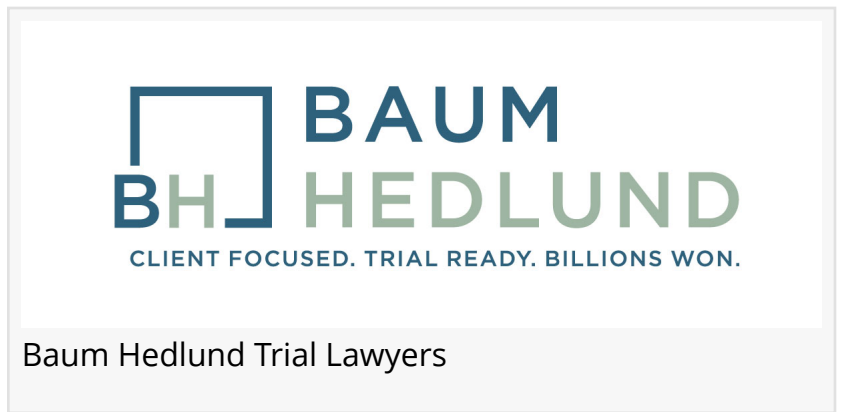
*Nicole Maldonado, Gardasil Injury Attorney*

Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman filed the complaint (Case 1:22-cv-10006) in U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts on January 3, 2022. The national law firm and co-counsel represent hundreds of Gardasil clients from across the country in similar cases against Merck.

“Merck has systematically misrepresented the safety profile and efficacy for Gardasil from the beginning,” says

attorney Nicole Maldonado. “The company told doctors that women who don't receive the

vaccine will go on to develop cancer even though there isn't a single study that proves Gardasil prevents cancer. They shamefully played on people's fears to increase profits."



Skylee Butler was 13 years old when she received the Gardasil vaccine. At the time, she had straight A's and sat on the student council of her middle school. She was a typical teenager who loved to read, listen to music, browse the internet, and spend time with friends.

Skylee's mother, Crystal Butler, consented to allow her daughter to receive the vaccine because she saw marketing from Merck that maintained Gardasil is very safe, that Gardasil prevents cancer and that teenagers must get the Gardasil vaccine.

Within a few weeks of receiving Gardasil, Skylee experienced back pain going up and down her spine. Because her pain never subsided, her mother took her to see her doctor. While X-rays showed no signs of any abnormalities, Skylee's doctor recommended physical therapy.

Skylee's health continued to decline over the following weeks. She started experiencing headaches, dizziness, pain all over her body, vision problems, and fatigue. Around this time, she was referred to a rheumatologist that diagnosed her with chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS). Her symptoms soon began to affect her schoolwork. Skylee found it very difficult to read and developed sensitivity to light, prompting her to wear sunglasses in classrooms. Her teachers would accommodate her by having her take exams in the classroom storage closets as they were the darkest areas around. Skylee's headaches made focusing in class incredibly difficult.

In January of 2014, Skylee was rushed to the emergency room after experiencing abdominal and chest pain. While there, she had a seizure. The doctors checked her heart through electrocardiography (EKG), and the results were normal. By March of 2014, Skylee's abdominal pain persisted along with other symptoms, including nausea. Her health issues prevented her from attending school in-person.

In April of 2014, Skylee was diagnosed with fibromyalgia. She began to have almost daily paralysis episodes that became more intense and long-lasting over time. In May of 2014, Skylee's doctors informed her that she needed treatment for her hypokalemic periodic paralysis episodes. In the summer of 2015, she had new symptoms such as drooling, speech problems, weakness, and muscle stiffening.

In August of 2014, Skylee started her first year of high school. Unfortunately, her experience was vastly different than her peers. Skylee did everything she could to stay in school full time, but

because of her periodic paralysis episodes, she completed the vast majority of her freshman year with a tutor at home. Her sophomore year consisted of in-person school and online schooling on the days she was ill. When she was attending school in person, she required the use of a wheelchair so her teachers could move her from class to class.

By the end of sophomore year, Skylee had to stop attending high school in person because her symptoms were too complicated for the staff to handle. She suffered more frequent paralytic attacks, which lasted for hours and involved choking, drooling, difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, stiff muscles, and hand tremors. By November of 2015, Skylee was also losing weight, despite maintaining a balanced diet.

After a scary episode in December of 2015, where her arms and legs became paralyzed, her doctors changed her medication, and she began to experience fewer paralytic episodes with shorter durations. Her appetite appeared to increase, but she still suffered from fatigue, chest, joint, abdominal pain, and headaches. But by June 2016, she started to have an increase in her paralytic episodes again and began averaging daily episodes, along with her usual symptoms of nausea, fatigue and pain on her joints, chest, and abdomen.

In August of 2016, Skylee experienced a traumatizing episode where she felt like she was swallowing her tongue and having difficulty breathing, causing her eyes to roll back. Her mother asked if she was aware of what was occurring. Skylee said that she was aware but could not react to it all. They went to the emergency room but left after waiting for hours without receiving any treatment. While her symptoms subsided at home, she was hospitalized the next day and remained there for three days as she had various paralytic attacks.

Months passed, and Skylee's health continued to deteriorate. Several physicians and specialists treated her for symptoms which now included (among others):

- Headaches
- Nausea
- Sleep disorders
- Insomnia
- Night sweats
- Tics
- Dizziness
- General weakness
- Body pains
- General paralysis
- Abdominal pain
- Fatigue
- Brain fog
- Menstrual issues
- Fluctuating appetite

- Light sensitivity
- Tachycardia
- Stomach issues

As a result of her severe post-Gardasil injuries and ailments, Skylee could not engage in the normal activities that teenage girls enjoy. She could no longer be physically active, participate in the activities she used to, or attend school in person. While Skylee was able to graduate from high school in 2018, she has not been able to gain employment because of her condition. Now 21, Skylee still deals with constant pain and occasional paralysis episodes. She lives with her parents and brother, who all care for her throughout the day.

Doctors have diagnosed Skylee with:

- Hypokalemic Periodic Paralysis (HOKPP)
- Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS)
- Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS)
- Autonomic Dysfunction

“When I was younger, it seemed like life was full of possibilities,” Skylee says. “I thought maybe I could move to New York someday and share an apartment with some friends. But Gardasil took all of that away. I don’t dream about an apartment in New York anymore—I dream about things most people probably take for granted, like being able to drive to the mall or go for a bike ride...I dream about feeling normal.”

### Gardasil Lawsuit Allegations Against Merck

Lawsuits against Merck include the following causes of action:

- 1) Negligence
- 2) Breach of Implied Warranty (Failure to Warn)
- 3) Breach of Implied Warranty (Manufacturing Defect)
- 4) Breach of Express Warranty
- 5) Common Law Fraud

Merck has a long history of bringing controversial products to market, including Fosamax (a purported bone density drug that caused bone fractures) and Nuvaring (a birth control device associated with life-threatening blood clots and death).

Merck’s most infamous drug is Vioxx, a pain medication the company had to pull from the market due to cardiovascular risks. Tens of thousands of patients filed lawsuits against Merck alleging they suffered heart attacks and other cardiovascular injuries as a result of ingesting the medication.

The litigation revealed that Merck knew early on that Vioxx was linked to fatal cardiovascular adverse events but intentionally chose to conceal the risks from the public and medical community. Lawsuits accused Merck of orchestrating a scheme to downplay the severity of the risks, misrepresenting the results of its clinical trials, failing to undertake the clinical trials that would reveal risks, and blacklisting medical professionals who dared to publicly criticize the safety of Vioxx.

Merck paid nearly \$5 billion to settle the tens of thousands of Vioxx personal injury actions and an additional \$1 billion to settle a securities class action. The company was also forced to pay \$950 million in civil and criminal fines to the Department of Justice and other governmental entities as a result of various criminal activities Merck had engaged in with respect to Vioxx.

Attorneys in the Gardasil litigation allege Merck has engaged in similar corporate malfeasance with its HPV vaccine.

According to Merck's marketing, Gardasil provides lifetime immunity to [cervical and other HPV-associated cancers](#). Plaintiffs in the Gardasil litigation, however, say Merck's marketing claim that Gardasil prevents cancer (not to mention lifetime immunity), is unproven. The allegations state that Gardasil may actually be more likely to cause cancer in those previously exposed to HPV than prevent it.

Lawsuits allege that Merck knows and actively conceals the fact that Gardasil can cause a constellation of serious adverse reactions and [side effects](#), including autoimmune diseases, and death in some recipients. According to the complaints, Gardasil contains numerous hazardous ingredients, including at least one ingredient that Merck failed to disclose to regulators and the public. Studies have shown that one of Gardasil's ingredients, Amorphous Aluminum Hydroxyphosphate Sulfate (AAHS) binds to non-vaccine proteins, triggering autoimmune disorders and other serious conditions.

Plaintiffs say Merck, in designing and conducting its clinical trials for Gardasil, concealed the risks to falsely enhance the vaccine's safety profile, just as the company did years prior with Vioxx. In order to obtain its Gardasil license, Merck designed its clinical trial studies to purposefully conceal evidence of chronic conditions such as autoimmune diseases while exaggerating the vaccine's purported efficacy, the lawsuits allege. This "wholesale fraud" and dishonesty in the clinical tests led many physicians to recommend the vaccination under false assumptions, attorneys say.

By December 2019, Gardasil had more reported adverse events than any other vaccine. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) had received more than 64,000 HPV vaccine adverse event reports by that time. It's not surprising then that the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) has paid out millions of dollars in damages for injuries and deaths.

“As a result of Merck’s fraud, Gardasil is wreaking havoc on a substantial swath of an entire generation of children and young adults on a worldwide scale,” the [Gardasil lawsuits](#) allege.

## About Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman

The award-winning law firm of Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman has successfully litigated cases against many of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world. Established in 1973, the firm has earned a reputation for breaking new legal ground, holding corporations accountable, influencing public policy, and raising public awareness on important safety issues. Using its longstanding tradition of success in the courtroom, the firm always strives to shine a spotlight on unsafe products or harmful practices to protect consumers from dangerous products. Across all areas of practice, the firm has won more than \$4 billion in settlements and verdicts.

Baum Hedlund wishes to stress that the firm is not against vaccines. Vaccines have the potential to eradicate disease and save millions of lives. The firm is, however, against intentional efforts to mislead consumers about the safety and effectiveness of a drug or vaccine. Baum Hedlund attorneys have always fought—and will continue to fight—for the rights of consumers to be fully and honestly informed about risks associated with any drug, vaccine, or medical device. The firm will work tirelessly to ensure those rights are defended and victims of injustice are compensated for their injuries.

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