

# Jury Needed Only 45 Minutes to Agree on Punitives in Johnson & Johnson Talc Case



*Image by Open  
Grid Scheduler  
/ Grid Engine*

A lawyer for plaintiffs in the case against talcum-powder maker Johnson & Johnson said the company had spent 40 years covering up evidence of asbestos in some of its talcum-based products and should mark those products with warning labels or focus on powders made with cornstarch.

**The New York Times** quoted Mark Lanier of The Lanier Law Firm as saying the jury's award of \$4.14 billion in punitive damages is among the largest ever awarded in a product liability case. He added that the jury deliberated over compensatory damages for eight hours but decided on the punitive damages in roughly 45 minutes.

*Times* reporter **Tiffany Hsu** writes: "Johnson & Johnson was ordered Thursday to pay \$4.69 billion to 22 women and their families who had claimed that asbestos in the company's talcum powder products caused them to develop ovarian cancer."

The jury's award included \$550 million in compensatory damages for the women, who had accused the company of failing to warn them about cancer risks associated with its baby and body

powders.

**Read the *NY Times* article.**