

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY  
NEWARK DIVISION**

**IN RE: PROTON PUMP INHIBITOR  
PRODUCTS LIABILITY LITIGATION  
(NO. II)**

**17-md-2789 (CCC)(MF)  
(MDL 2789)**

**This Document Relates To:**

**CIVIL ACTION NO.**

**SETH WRIGHT AND CAROL WRIGHT, h/w,**

*Plaintiffs,*

**v.**

**COMPLAINT AND JURY DEMAND**

**ASTRAZENECA PHARMACEUTICALS LP  
and ASTRAZENECA LP.**

*Defendants.*

**COMPLAINT**

Plaintiffs, Seth Wright and Carol Wright, by way of Complaint against Defendants, AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP and AstraZeneca LP (collectively “Defendants) allege as follows:

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

1. This is an action for personal injuries and economic damages suffered by Plaintiffs, Seth Wright and Carol Wright, as a direct and proximate result of Defendants’ negligent and wrongful conduct in connection with the design, development, manufacture, testing, packaging, promoting, marketing, distribution, labeling and/or sale of the proton pump

inhibiting (“PPI”) drug known as Nexium (esomeprazole magnesium) and/or other Nexium-branded products with the same active ingredient herein collectively referred to as “NEXIUM”.

### **PARTIES**

2. At all times referenced herein, Plaintiff, Seth Wright, was and is a citizen of the state of Arizona.

3. At all times referenced herein, Plaintiff, Carol Wright, was and is a citizen of the state of Arizona.

#### **AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP**

4. Defendant AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP is, and all times relevant to this action was, a Limited Partnership with its principal place of business in Wilmington, Delaware.

5. At all times relevant hereto, Defendant AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP was engaged in the business of designing, developing, manufacturing, testing, packaging, promoting, marketing, distributing, labeling and/or selling Nexium products.

6. Upon information and belief, at all relevant times, Defendant AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP was present and doing business in Plaintiffs’ state of residency and the State of New Jersey.

7. At all relevant times, Defendant AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP transacted, solicited and conducted business in Plaintiffs’ state of residency and the State of New Jersey and derived substantial revenue from such business.

8. At all relevant times, Defendant AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP expected or should have expected that its acts would have consequences throughout the United States of America including the State of New Jersey in particular.

9. Defendant AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP is the holder of approved New Drug Applications (“NDAs”) for the following forms of Nexium: Delayed-Release Capsule Pellets

(20 mg and 40 mg), with NDA #021153, approved on 2/20/2001; Delayed-Release Oral Suspension Packets (2.5MG, 5MG, 20MG, 40MG), with NDA # 021957, approved on 10/20/2006; Delayed-Release Oral Suspension Packets (10MG), with NDA # 022101, approved on 02/27/2008; and Injection (20MG VIAL, 40MG VIAL), with NDA # 022101, approved on 03/31/2005.

AstraZeneca LP

10. Defendant AstraZeneca LP is, and all times relevant to this action was a Limited Partnership with its principal place of business in Wilmington, Delaware.

11. At all relevant times, Defendant AstraZeneca LP was engaged in the business of designing, developing, manufacturing, testing, packaging, promoting, marketing, distributing, labeling and/or selling Nexium products.

12. Upon information and belief, at all relevant times, Defendant AstraZeneca LP was present and doing business in Plaintiffs' state of residency and the State of New Jersey.

13. At all relevant times, Defendant AstraZeneca LP transacted, solicited and conducted business in Plaintiffs' state of residency and the State of New Jersey and derived substantial revenue from such business.

14. At all relevant times, Defendant AstraZeneca LP expected or should have expected that its acts would have consequences throughout the United States of America, including the State of New Jersey in particular.

Defendants' Unity of Interest

15. Upon information and belief, at all relevant times, each of the Defendants and their directors and/or officers acted within the scope of their authority for and on behalf of the other Defendant. During all relevant times, Defendants possessed a unity of interest between themselves and exercised control over their respective subsidiaries and affiliates.

16. Upon information and belief, at all relevant times, each Defendant was the agent and employee of the other Defendant, and in performing the wrongful acts alleged, each Defendant was acting within the course and scope of such agency and employment with each Defendants' actual and implied permission, consent, authorization and approval. As such, each Defendant is individually, as well as jointly and severally, liable to Plaintiffs for Plaintiffs' injuries, losses and damages.

17. Defendants AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP and AstraZeneca LP are thus collectively referred to herein as "Defendants" or "AstraZeneca".

### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

18. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a)(1) because this case is a civil action where the matter in controversy exceeds \$75,000, exclusive of interest and costs, and is between citizens of different States.

19. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) as a substantial part of the events and/or omissions giving rise to the Plaintiffs' claims emanated from activities within this jurisdiction and Defendants transact substantial business within this jurisdiction.

20. Consistent with the Due Process Clause of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments, the Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendants, because Defendants are present in the State of New Jersey, such that the exercise of jurisdiction does not offend traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

21. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendants pursuant to and consistent with the Constitutional requirements of Due Process because Defendants, acting through their agents or apparent agents, committed one or more of the following: transaction of business within the state of New Jersey; making of contracts within the state; the commission of a tortious act within this state; and the ownership, use, or possession of any real estate situated within this

state as well as registered as foreign partnerships to do business within the state and maintaining a registered agent for service of process.

22. Requiring Defendants to litigate these claims in New Jersey does not offend traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice and is permitted by the United States Constitution. All of Plaintiffs' claims arise in part from conduct Defendants purposefully directed to the State of New Jersey. Upon information and belief, Defendants' Nexium products are sold at hundreds of local and national pharmacies, including, but not limited to Wal-Mart, Target, CVS, and Walgreens throughout Plaintiffs' state of residency and the State of New Jersey.

23. Upon information and belief, Defendants avail themselves of numerous advertising and promotional materials regarding their defective Nexium products specifically intended to reach healthcare provider and consumers in Plaintiffs' home state and the State of New Jersey, including but not limited to advertisements on local television programs, advertisements on local radio broadcasts, advertisements on billboards and advertisements in print publications delivered to consumers in Plaintiffs' home state of and the State of New Jersey.

24. Plaintiffs' claims arise out of Defendants' design, marketing and/or sale of Nexium products in the State of New Jersey.

25. Defendants regularly conduct or solicit business and derive substantial revenue from goods used or consumed in, inter alia, the State of New Jersey.

26. At all relevant times, Defendants were present and doing business in the State of New Jersey.

27. At all times relevant hereto, Defendants transacted, solicited, and conducted business in the State of New Jersey and derived substantial revenue from such business.

28. At all relevant times, Defendants placed Nexium products ingested by Plaintiff, Seth Wright, into the stream of interstate commerce.

29. At all relevant times, Defendants expected or should have expected that their acts and omissions would have consequences within the United States, including the State of New Jersey in particular.

30. Defendants regularly file patent infringement claims against non New Jersey Corporations in New Jersey Federal Court thereby availing themselves of the benefits of New Jersey courts, laws and jurisdiction. *See AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP, et al. v. Teva Pharmaceuticals*, Case 1:17-CV-02448-RMB-KMW, filed April 10, 2017; *See also AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, LP, et al. v. HBT Labs, Inc.*, Case 1:17-CV-02652, filed April 18, 2017.

31. Defendants have obtained a Certificate of Registration with the New Jersey Department of Health Drug and Medical Devices, Registration No. 5003966; 5003887.

32. Defendants maintain a registered agent in Trenton, New Jersey.

33. Defendants, by and through their actions stated above, have consented to jurisdiction in state of New Jersey.

34. Defendants, by and through their actions stated above, are judicially estopped from challenging jurisdiction in New Jersey State and Federal Courts under the doctrine of Judicial Estoppel.

35. Defendants named herein are conclusively presumed to have been doing business in this state and are subject to New Jersey long arm jurisdiction.

## **GENERAL FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

### **A. Proton Pump Inhibitors Generally**

36. Proton pump inhibitors (“PPIs”) are one of the most commonly prescribed medications in the United States. In 2013, more than 15 million Americans used prescription PPIs, costing more than \$10 billion.

37. PPIs are indicated for the treatment of conditions such as: Gastroesophageal reflux disease (“GERD”); dyspepsia; acid peptic disease; Zollinger-Ellison syndrome; acid reflux; and peptic or stomach ulcers.

38. Nexium (esomeprazole magnesium) is a PPI that work by inhibiting the secretion of stomach acid. It shuts down acid production of the active acid pumps in the stomach thereby reducing hydrochloric acid in the stomach. The drug binds with the proton pump which inhibits the ability of the gastric parietal cell to secrete gastric acid.

39. Defendants manufactured and sold Nexium with National Drug Code (“NDC”) numbers 0186-5020, 0186-5022, 0186-5040, 0186-5042, 0186-40100186-4020, and 0186-4040.

40. Nexium is AstraZeneca’s largest-selling drug, and in the world market, the third largest selling drug overall. In 2005, AstraZeneca’s sales of Nexium exceeded \$5.7 billion. In 2008, Nexium sales exceeded \$5.2 billion.

### **B. Dangers Associated with PPIs**

41. During the period in which Nexium has been sold in the United States, hundreds of reports of injury have been submitted to the FDA regarding the ingestion of Nexium and other PPIs. Defendants have had notice of serious adverse health outcomes through case reports, clinical studies and post-market surveillance. Specifically, Defendants have received numerous case reports of several types of kidney injuries in patients who ingested Nexium, including:

Acute Interstitial Nephritis (“AIN”); Chronic Kidney Disease (“CKD”); Renal/Kidney Failure; and Acute Kidney Injury (“AKI”).

42. These reports put Defendants on notice of the excessive risk of kidney injury related to the use of Nexium. However, Defendants took no action to inform Plaintiffs or Plaintiff’s physicians of these risks. Instead, Defendants continued to represent that Nexium did not pose any risk of kidney injuries.

**C. Acute Interstitial Nephritis Dangers Associated with PPIs**

43. Acute Interstitial Nephritis (“AIN”) is the inflammation of the tubes and tissues of the kidneys. The most common symptoms of AIN are fatigue, nausea and weakness. Symptoms related to AIN can begin as soon as one week following PPI ingestion.

44. The risk of AIN among PPI users was first raised in 1992. Five years later, an additional study raised concerns. Between 2004 and 2007, at least three additional studies confirmed AIN related to PPI usage. More recent studies indicate that those using PPIs such as Nexium are at a three times greater risk than the general population to suffer AIN.

45. By July 2011, the World Health Organization adverse drug reaction report included nearly 500 cases of AIN already reported that year.

46. On or about October 30, 2014, the FDA notified Defendants that it had determined that PPIs, including Nexium, pose additional risks not previously disclosed.

47. On December 19, 2014, labeling for PPIs was updated to include a warning about AIN. The new label added, for the first time, a section about AIN that read, in relevant part, that AIN “may occur at any point during PPI therapy.”

48. However, the current warning regarding the risk of AIN is far from adequate, lacking the necessary force and specificity to give patients and their healthcare providers the proper information needed to make an informed decision about whether to start or continue a



drug regimen with the potential for such dire consequences. If left untreated, AIN can lead to Chronic Kidney Disease, Renal Failure, Dialysis, Kidney Transplant and/or death.

**D. Chronic Kidney Disease Associated with PPIs**

49. Chronic Kidney Disease (“CKD”) is the gradual loss of kidney function. Kidneys filter waste and excess fluid from the blood, which are then excreted. When CKD reaches an advanced stage, dangerous levels of fluid, electrolytes and waste can build up in the body.

50. In the early stages of CKD, patients may have few signs or symptoms. CKD may not become apparent until kidney function is significantly impaired.

51. Treatment for CKD focuses on slowing the progression of kidney damage, usually by attempting to control the underlying cause. CKD can progress to end-stage kidney failure, which can be fatal absent artificial filtering, dialysis or a kidney transplant. Early treatment is often the key to avoiding the most negative outcomes.

52. CKD is associated with a substantially increased risk of death and cardiovascular events.

53. Recent studies have shown the long term use of PPIs was independently associated with a 20% to 50% higher risk of CKD, after adjusting for several potential confounding variables, including demographics, socioeconomic status, clinical measurements, prevalent co-morbidities, and concomitant use of medications.

54. In at least one recent study, the use of PPIs for *any* period of time, was shown to increase the risk of CKD by 10%.

55. A meta-analysis that was recently published in 2017 indicated that there was a significantly increased risk of CKD associated with use of PPIs in the absence of intervening acute kidney injury.

56. Currently, the Nexium product labeling does not contain any warning regarding the increased risk of CKD.

**E. Acute Kidney Injury Dangers Associated with PPIs**

57. Recent studies indicate that those using PPIs such as Nexium are at a more than 2.5 times greater risk than the general population to suffer Acute Kidney Injury (“AKI”).

58. Recent studies also indicated that those who develop AIN are at a significant risk of AKI even though they may not obviously exhibit kidney dysfunction.

59. Currently, the Nexium product labeling does not contain any warning regarding the increased risk of AKI.

**F. Safer Alternatives to PPIs**

60. Despite the fact that Nexium and other PPIs lead to an increased risk of numerous injuries as outlined herein, several safer alternatives are available, including but not limited to:

- a. The use of over-the-counter calcium carbonate remedies tablets that have been available since the 1930s, such as Maalox and Tums; and/or
- b. The use of histamine H<sub>2</sub>-receptor antagonists (also known as H<sub>2</sub> blockers) that were developed in the late 1960s. H<sub>2</sub> blockers act to prevent the production of stomach acid and work more quickly than PPIs and are prescribed for the same indications as PPI's. Examples of H<sub>2</sub> blockers include Zantac, Pepcid and Tagamet. H<sub>2</sub> receptor antagonists are not associated with an increased risk of renal injuries.

**G. Allegations Common to All Causes of Action**

61. Defendants knew or should have known about the correlation between the use of Nexium and the significantly increased risks of AIN, CKD, AKI, other renal impairment, and/or death. Yet, Defendants failed to adequately warn of these risks from ingestion of Nexium, including the negative effects on the kidney.

62. In omitting, concealing, and inadequately providing critical safety information regarding the use of Nexium to Plaintiffs and Plaintiff's healthcare providers, Defendants engaged in, and continue to engage in, conduct likely to mislead healthcare providers and consumers, including Plaintiffs and Plaintiff's healthcare providers. This conduct is fraudulent, unfair and unlawful.

63. Despite clear knowledge that Nexium causes a significantly increased risk of CKD, AKI and other renal impairment, Defendants continue to market and sell Nexium without warning consumers or healthcare providers in any format including but not limited to in product labeling or direct to consumer advertising, of the significant risks to the kidney.

64. Defendants still do not warn of the potential risks of CKD and AKI associated with the use of Nexium in the product labeling nor in direct to consumer advertising.

65. Plaintiffs were not aware of the potential risks of CKD, AKI, or acute renal failure associated with the use of Nexium until recently nor were Plaintiffs aware that Plaintiff Seth Wright's injuries could have been caused by Plaintiff Seth Wright's use of Nexium.

#### **H. Plaintiff's Use of Nexium and Resulting Harm**

66. Plaintiff, Seth Wright, is and was, at all relevant times, a citizen of the state of Arizona.

67. Plaintiff was born on February 28, 1956.

68. Upon information and belief, Plaintiff, Seth Wright, was prescribed Nexium on numerous occasions, beginning as early as 2002, and consistently thereafter through 2006. Plaintiff, Seth Wright, ingested Nexium as prescribed by his prescribing physicians.

69. Plaintiff, Seth Wright, would not have used Nexium had he been properly warned of the kidney risks associated with its ingestion.

70. As a result of using Defendants' Nexium, Plaintiff's now suffers from Chronic Kidney Disease and underwent dialysis and a kidney transplant. Plaintiff, Seth Wright, sustained severe and permanent personal injuries, pain, suffering, economic loss, and emotional distress.

71. The aforementioned injuries and damages sustained by Plaintiff, Seth Wright, were caused by the ingestion of Defendants' Nexium.

72. Plaintiff, Carol Wright, spouse of Plaintiff, Seth Wright, suffered a loss of consortium as a result of her husband's Nexium usage.

73. Plaintiffs were not aware that Plaintiff, Seth Wright's kidney injuries could be a result of his Nexium use until recently.

#### **TOLLING OF THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

74. From the time Defendants began developing Nexium, up to and including the present time, Defendants through their public relations efforts fraudulently and negligently represented to the medical and healthcare community, the FDA, the public, include to Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians, that Nexium had been tested and was found to be safe and/or effective for its indicated use. Defendants regularly made these representations through various channels including through reports, press releases, advertising campaigns, television commercials, print ads, magazine ads, billboards, other commercial media, and their product labeling that was distributed and/or directed to the medical communities and public, including Plaintiff and his prescribing physicians.

75. Defendants, from the time they submitted their respective NDAs, up to and including the present, knew or should have known of the risks and defects with Nexium products, however Defendants concealed their knowledge of Nexium's risks and defects and failed to notify the medical community, the FDA, the public, including Plaintiff and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians.

76. Defendants, through their affirmative misrepresentations and omissions, actively concealed from Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians the true and significant risks associated with the use of Nexium.

77. Defendants undertook such action with the intent of defrauding and deceiving the public and the medical community at large, including Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians, with the intent of inducing the prescription, dispensing, and/or purchasing of Nexium for the treatment of GERD, and his hernia with ulcerated esophagitis all of which evidenced a callous, reckless, willful indifference to the health, safety and welfare of Plaintiffs herein.

78. Plaintiffs and/or Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians relied upon information disseminated by Defendants via their Nexium marketing campaign and/or the information published in Nexium's labeling and prescribing information.

79. As a result of Defendants' actions, Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians were unaware, and could have not have reasonably known or learned through reasonable diligence that Plaintiff, Seth Wright, had been exposed to the risks alleged herein, and that those risks were the direct and proximate results of Defendants' actions, omissions, and misrepresentations.

80. Any applicable statute of limitations has therefore been tolled by Defendants' knowledge, active concealment and denial of the facts alleged herein, which behavior is still ongoing.

81. As a result of Defendants' fraudulent and unlawful conduct set forth herein, Plaintiffs only recently discovered that Plaintiffs' injuries could have been caused by Plaintiff, Seth Wright's use of Nexium.

**COUNT I**  
**PRODUCT LIABILITY- DEFECTIVE DESIGN**  
**(N.J.S.A. 2A:58C-1, *et seq.*)**

82. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

83. Nexium is defective in its design or formulation in that it is not reasonably fit, suitable, or safe for its intended purpose and/or its foreseeable risks exceed the benefits associated with its design and formulation.

84. At all times relevant hereto, Nexium was expected to reach, and did reach, consumers in Plaintiffs' home state and throughout the United States, including receipt by Plaintiff, Seth Wright, without substantial change in the condition in which it was sold.

85. At all times relevant hereto, Nexium was designed, developed, manufactured, tested, packaged, promoted, marketed, distributed, labeled, and/or sold by Defendants in a defective and unreasonably dangerous condition at the time it was placed in the stream of commerce in ways which include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- a. When placed in the stream of commerce, Nexium contained unreasonably dangerous design defects and was not reasonably safe as intended to be used, subjecting Plaintiff, Seth Wright, to risks that exceeded the benefits of the subject product, including, but not limited to, permanent personal injuries including, but not limited to, developing CKD, renal failure and other serious injuries and side effects;
- b. When placed in the stream of commerce, Nexium was defective in design and formulation, making the use of Nexium more dangerous than an ordinary consumer would expect, and more dangerous than other risks associated with the other medications and similar drugs on the market to treat GERD and other stomach-acid-related ailments;
- c. The design of Nexium existed before it left the control of Defendants;

- d. Nexium was insufficiently and inadequately tested;
- e. Nexium caused harmful effects that outweighed any potential utility; and
- f. Nexium was not accompanied by adequate instructions and/or warnings to fully apprise consumers, including Plaintiff, Seth Wright, of the full nature and extent of the risks and side effects associated with its use, thereby rendering Defendants liable to Plaintiffs.

86. In addition, at the time the subject product left the control of Defendants, there were practical and feasible alternative designs that would have prevented and/or significantly reduced the risk of Plaintiff's injuries without impairing the reasonably anticipated or intended function of the product. These safer alternative designs were economically and technologically feasible – indeed they were already on the market – and would have prevented or significantly reduced the risk of Plaintiffs' injuries without substantially impairing the product's utility.

87. As a direct and proximate result of Nexium's defective design, Plaintiff, Seth Wright, was caused to suffer serious and dangerous injuries including kidney injuries, physical pain and mental anguish, and diminished enjoyment of life.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court enter judgment in Plaintiffs' favor for compensatory and punitive damages, together with interest, costs herein incurred, attorneys' fees, and all such other further relief as this Court deems just and proper. Plaintiffs also demand that the issues contained herein be tried by a jury.

**COUNT II**  
**PRODUCT LIABILITY – FAILURE TO WARN**  
**(N.J.S.A 2A:58C-1, *et seq.*)**

88. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

89. Nexium was defective and unreasonably dangerous when they left the possession of Defendants in that they contained warnings insufficient to alert consumers and the medical community, including Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians, of the dangerous risks and reactions associated with the subject product, including but not limited to its propensity to permanent physical injuries including, but not limited to, developing CKD, renal failure, and other serious injuries, side effects, and death; notwithstanding Defendants' knowledge of an increased risk of these injuries and side effects over other forms of treatment for GERD and other stomach-acid-related ailments. Thus, the subject products were unreasonably dangerous because an adequate warning was not provided as required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:58C-1, *et seq.*

90. The subject products manufactured and supplied by Defendants were defective due to inadequate post-marketing warnings or instructions because, after Defendants knew or should have known of the risk of serious bodily harm for the use of the subject product, Defendants failed to provide an adequate warning to consumers and/or their healthcare providers, including to Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians, of the defects of the product, and/or alternatively failed to conform to federal and/or state requirements for labeling, warnings and instruction, or recall, while knowing that the product could cause serious injury and/or death.

91. Plaintiff, Seth Wright, was prescribed and used the subject products for its intended purpose.

92. Plaintiffs could not have discovered any defect in the subject product through the exercise of reasonable care.

93. Defendants, as manufacturers and/or distributors of the subject prescription product, are held to the level of knowledge of an expert in the field.



94. Defendants, the manufacturers and/or distributors of the subject prescription product, are held to a level of knowledge of an expert in the field as the Reference Listed Drug Company and the New Drug Application Holder.

95. The warnings that were given by Defendants were not accurate, clear, and/or were ambiguous.

96. The warnings that were given by Defendants failed to properly warn consumers and the medical community, including Plaintiff, Seth Wright, and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians of the increased risks of permanent physical injuries including, but not limited to, Acute Interstitial Nephritis (AIN), Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), Renal/Kidney Failure, Acute Kidney Injury (AKI), Clostridium difficile, and/or death.

97. Plaintiffs, individually and through Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physician, reasonably relied upon the skill, superior knowledge, and judgment of Defendants.

98. Defendants had a continuing duty to warn Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians of the dangers associated with Nexium.

99. Had Plaintiffs received adequate warnings regarding the risks of Nexium, Plaintiff, Seth Wright, would not have used it and/or chosen a different course of treatment.

100. As a direct and proximate result of Nexium's defective and inadequate warnings, Plaintiff, Seth Wright, was caused to suffer serious and dangerous injuries including kidney injuries, physical pain and mental anguish and diminished enjoyment of life.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court enter judgment in Plaintiffs' favor for compensatory and punitive damages, together with interest, costs herein incurred, attorneys' fees, and all such other further relief as this Court deems just and proper. Plaintiffs also demand that the issues contained herein be tried by a jury.

**COUNT III**  
**BREACH OF EXPRESS WARRANTY**

101. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

102. Defendants expressly represented to consumers and the medical community, including to Plaintiff and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians, that Nexium was safe and fit for its intended purposes, was of merchantable quality, did not produce any dangerous side effects, and had been adequately tested.

103. Nexium does not conform to Defendants' express representations because it is not safe, has numerous and serious side effects, and causes severe and permanent injuries, including, but not limited to, developing CKD, AIN, acute renal failure and other serious injuries and side effects and/or death when taken as indicated.

104. At the time of making of the express warranties, Defendants knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known, of the purpose for which the subject product was to be used and warranted the same to be, in all respects, fit, safe, and effective and proper for such purpose. The subject product was unreasonably dangerous because it failed to conform to an express warranty of Defendants.

105. At the time of the making of the express warranties, Defendants knew or should have known that, in fact, said representations and warranties were false, misleading, and untrue in that the subject product was not safe and fit for its intended use and, in fact, produces serious injuries to the user.

106. At all relevant times, Nexium did not perform as safely as an ordinary consumer would expect, when used as intended or in a reasonably foreseeable manner.

107. Consumers and the medical community, including Plaintiff, Seth Wright, and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians, relied upon Defendants' express warranties.

108. Contrary to the express warranty for the subject product, Nexium was not of merchantable quality, and was not safe or fit for intended uses and purposes, as alleged herein.

109. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' breach of express warranty, Plaintiff, Seth Wright, was caused to suffer serious and dangerous side effects including kidney injuries, physical pain and mental anguish, and diminished enjoyment of life.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court enter judgment in Plaintiffs' favor for compensatory and punitive damages, together with interest, cost herein incurred, attorneys' fees, and all such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper. Plaintiffs also demand that the issues contained herein be tried by a jury.

**COUNT IV**  
**LOSS OF CONSORTIUM**

110. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

111. At all times relevant hereto, Plaintiff, Carol Wright, was and is the wife and spouse of Plaintiff, Seth Wright.

112. As a result of the injuries sustained by Plaintiff, Seth Wright, as set forth above, Plaintiff, Carol Wright, has suffered loss of consortium, including but not limited to, mental anguish and the loss of her husband's support, services, society, companionship, comfort, affection, love and solace.

113. As a result of the injuries sustained by Plaintiff, Seth Wright, as set forth above, Plaintiffs, Seth Wright and Carol Wright, have sustained damage to their marital relationship.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court enter judgment in Plaintiffs' favor for compensatory and punitive damages, together with interest, cost herein incurred, attorneys' fees, and all such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper. Plaintiffs also demand that the issues contained herein be tried by a jury.

**COUNT V**  
**PUNITIVE DAMAGES ALLEGATIONS**  
**(N.J.S.A. 2A:58C-5c)**

114. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

115. Despite the holding of *McDarby v. Merck & Co.*, 949 A.2d 223 (N.J. Super. Ct. App. Div. 2008), numerous courts around the country, and in this District specifically, have found that punitive damages are appropriate under N.J. Stat. Ann. § 2A:58C-5c subsequent to *Wyeth v. Levine*, 555 U.S. 555 (2009). *See, e.g., Sullivan v. Novartis Pharms. Corp.*, 602 F. Supp. 2d 527, 534 n.8 (D.N.J. 2009) ("The validity of *McDarby* was subsequently cast into some doubt by the Supreme Court's decision in *Wyeth*.").

116. The wrongs done by Defendants were aggravated by malice, fraud, and grossly negligent disregard for the rights of others, the public, and Plaintiffs, in that Defendants' conduct was specifically intended to cause substantial injury to Plaintiffs. When viewed objectively from Defendants' standpoint at the time of the conduct, considering the probability and magnitude of the potential harm to others, Defendants' conduct involved an extreme degree of risk. Defendants were actually, subjectively aware of the risk involved, but nevertheless proceeded with complete indifference to or a conscious disregard for the rights, safety, or welfare of others. Moreover, Defendants made material representations that were false, with actual knowledge of or reckless disregard for their falsity, with the intent that the representations be acted on by Plaintiffs and Plaintiff, Seth Wright's healthcare providers.

117. Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's healthcare providers relied on Defendants' representations and Plaintiffs suffered injuries as a proximate result of this reliance.

118. Plaintiffs therefore assert claims for exemplary damages.

119. Plaintiffs also allege that the acts and omissions of Defendants, whether taken singularly or in combination with others, constitute gross negligence that proximately caused the injuries to Plaintiffs.

120. Plaintiffs are entitled to an award of punitive and exemplary damages based upon Defendants' intentional, willful, knowing, fraudulent, and malicious acts, omissions, and conduct, and Defendants' reckless disregard for the public safety and welfare. Defendants intentionally and fraudulently misrepresented facts and information to both the medical community and the general public, including to Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Seth Wright's prescribing physicians, by making intentionally false and fraudulent misrepresentations about the safety of Nexium. Defendants intentionally concealed the true facts and information regarding the serious risks of harm associated with the ingestion of Nexium, and intentionally downplayed the type, nature, and extent of the adverse side effects of ingesting Nexium, despite their knowledge and awareness of these serious side effects and risks.

121. Defendants had knowledge of, and were in possession of evidence demonstrating that Nexium caused serious side effects. Notwithstanding Defendants' knowledge, Defendants continued to market the drug by providing false and misleading information with regard to the product's safety to regulatory agencies, the medical community, and consumers of Nexium.

122. Although Defendants knew or recklessly disregarded the fact that Nexium causes debilitating and potentially lethal side effects, Defendants continued to market, promote, and distribute Nexium to consumers, including Plaintiffs, without disclosing these side effects when there were safer alternative methods for treating GERD.

123. Defendants failed to provide adequate warnings that would have dissuaded healthcare professionals from prescribing Nexium and consumers from purchasing and ingesting Nexium, thus depriving both from weighing the true risks against the benefits of prescribing, purchasing, or consuming Nexium.

124. Defendants knew of Nexium's defective natures as set forth herein, but continued to design, manufacture, market, distribute, sell, and/or promote the drug to maximize sales and profits at the expense of the health and safety of the public, including Plaintiffs, in a conscious, reckless, or negligent disregard of the foreseeable harm caused by Nexium.

125. Defendants' acts, conduct, and omissions were willful and malicious. Defendants committed these acts with knowing, conscious, and deliberate disregard for the rights, health, and safety of Plaintiff and other Nexium users and for the primary purpose of increasing Defendants' profits from the sale and distribution of Nexium. Defendants' outrageous and unconscionable conduct warrants an award of exemplary and punitive damages against Defendants in an amount appropriate to punish and make an example out of Defendants.

126. Prior to the manufacture, sale, and distribution of Nexium, Defendants knew that the drug was in a defective condition and knew that those who were prescribed the medication would experience and did experience severe physical, mental, and emotional injuries. Further, Defendants, through their officers, directors, managers, and agents, knew that the drug presented a substantial and unreasonable risk of harm to the public, including Plaintiffs. As such, Defendants unreasonably subjected consumers of Nexium to risk of injury or death.

127. Despite this knowledge, Defendants, acting through their officers, directors and managing agents, for the purposes of enhancing Defendants' profits, knowingly and deliberately failed to remedy the known defects in Nexium and failed to adequately warn the public, including Plaintiff, of the extreme risk of injury occasioned by said defects. Defendants and

their agents, officers, and directors intentionally proceeded with the manufacturing, sale, distribution, and marketing of Nexium knowing these actions would expose person to serious danger in order to advance Defendants' pecuniary interest and monetary profits.

128. Defendants' conduct was committed with willful and conscious disregard for the safety of Plaintiffs, entitling Plaintiffs to exemplary damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court enter judgment in Plaintiffs' favor for compensatory and punitive damages, together with interest, cost herein incurred, attorneys' fees, and all such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper. Plaintiffs also demand that the issues contained herein be tried by a jury.

### **RELIEF REQUESTED**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs pray for judgment against all Defendants and award additional relief as follows:

1. Economic and non-economic damages, special damages and general damages, including pain and suffering, in an amount to be supported by the evidence at trial;
2. For compensatory damages for the acts complained of herein in an amount to be determined by a jury;
3. For disgorgement of profits for the acts complained of herein in an amount to be determined by a jury;
4. Punitive damages for the acts complained of herein in an amount to be determined by a jury;
5. For an award of attorneys' fees and costs;
6. For prejudgment interest;
7. For the costs of suit;

8. For post-judgment interest; and
9. For such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

**JURY TRIAL DEMAND**

Plaintiffs demand a jury as to all claims and issues triable of right by a jury.

Respectfully submitted,

**ANAPOL WEISS**

/s/ Tracy A. Finken

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Sol H. Weiss, Esquire

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*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

Dated: November 29, 2017



JS 44 (Rev. 07/16)

**CIVIL COVER SHEET**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

**I. (a) PLAINTIFFS**

Seth Wright and Carol Wright, h/w

**DEFENDANTS**

AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP and AstraZeneca LP

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Maricopa, AZ  
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant \_\_\_\_\_  
(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, Email and Telephone Number)  
Anapol Weiss -1040 Kings Highway North, Suite 304  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034  
tfinken@anapolweiss.com; 215-735-1130

**II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
- ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant
- ☐ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)
- ☒ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

**III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES** (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

- |   |                                       |                            |   |                            |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|   | PTF                                   | DEF                        |   | PTF                        | DEF                                   |
| Citizen of This State                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State     | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4            |
| Citizen of Another State                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country | <input type="checkbox"/> 3            | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Foreign Nation  | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6            |

**IV. NATURE OF SUIT** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

CONTRACT	TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES	
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act <input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument <input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment <input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act <input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) <input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits <input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract <input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise	<b>PERSONAL INJURY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane <input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander <input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury <input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice	<b>PERSONAL INJURY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 367 Health Care/Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability <b>PERSONAL PROPERTY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 370 Other Fraud <input type="checkbox"/> 371 Truth in Lending <input type="checkbox"/> 380 Other Personal Property Damage <input type="checkbox"/> 385 Property Damage Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 <input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other <b>LABOR</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 710 Fair Labor Standards Act <input type="checkbox"/> 720 Labor/Management Relations <input type="checkbox"/> 740 Railway Labor Act <input type="checkbox"/> 751 Family and Medical Leave Act <input type="checkbox"/> 790 Other Labor Litigation <input type="checkbox"/> 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act <b>IMMIGRATION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 462 Naturalization Application <input type="checkbox"/> 465 Other Immigration Actions	<input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 <input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 <b>PROPERTY RIGHTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights <input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent <input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark <b>SOCIAL SECURITY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff) <input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923) <input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) <input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI <input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g)) <b>FEDERAL TAX SUITS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) <input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	<input type="checkbox"/> 375 False Claims Act <input type="checkbox"/> 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a)) <input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment <input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust <input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking <input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation <input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit <input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV <input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange <input type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions <input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts <input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters <input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act <input type="checkbox"/> 896 Arbitration <input type="checkbox"/> 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision <input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
<b>REAL PROPERTY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation <input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure <input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment <input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land <input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	<b>CIVIL RIGHTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting <input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other <input type="checkbox"/> 448 Education	<b>PRISONER PETITIONS</b> <b>Habeas Corpus:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 463 Alien Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence <input type="checkbox"/> 530 General <input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty <b>Other:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other <input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition <input type="checkbox"/> 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement			

**V. ORIGIN** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☐ 1 Original Proceeding
- ☐ 2 Removed from State Court
- ☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court
- ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened
- ☐ 5 Transferred from Another District (specify)
- ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer
- ☒ 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

**VI. CAUSE OF ACTION**

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):

28 USC 1332(a)(1)

Brief description of cause:  
Products Liability Litigation

**VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:**

☐ CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.

DEMAND \$

CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:

JURY DEMAND: ☒ Yes ☐ No

**VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY**

(See instructions):

JUDGE Claire C. Cecchi

DOCKET NUMBER 2:17-md-2789-CCC-MF

DATE  
11/29/2017

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD  
/s/ Tracy A. Finken, Esquire

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT # \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT \_\_\_\_\_ APPLYING IFP \_\_\_\_\_ JUDGE \_\_\_\_\_ MAG. JUDGE \_\_\_\_\_