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Attorneys at Law

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A Lawyer with Unmatched Expertise in Medical and Scientific Cases

Donald C. Arbitblit is a leader among plaintiffs' attorneys in assessing the legal, medical, and scientific aspects of personal injury, mass torts, and environmental and toxic exposure litigation. Don has served on Plaintiffs' Science/Expert Committees in several national cases and served on the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee in the federal Actos bladder cancer injuries multidistrict litigation that settled in 2015 for \$2.4 billion.

Don was a member of the trial team that won the first ACTOS bellwether trial in April 2014, including a \$9 billion punitive damage award. Don was also Chair of the Epidemiology/Causation Subcommittee of the federal Vioxx litigation from 2005-2010, and he was a member of the trial team that won a plaintiffs' verdict in that litigation in 2006. Between 1998 and 2014, Don served on science and expert witness committees in the ACTOS, Yaz, Fen-Phen Diet Drug, Rezulin, Baycol, Vioxx, and Sulzer hip implant cases.

Don has specialized in toxic exposure and defective pharmaceutical cases for twenty-six years. From 1994 to 1998, Don was lead counsel for a certified class of women who were intentionally exposed to radioactive iron without their consent while receiving prenatal care at Vanderbilt University hospital in the 1940s. Settlement included \$10.3 million and a formal apology from Vanderbilt University.

Don also played a leading role in California coordinated litigation arising out of the Sacramento River Spill of 1991; the release of a sulfuric acid cloud from the General Chemical plant in Richmond, California in 1993; and a 1995 toxic release from the Unocal refinery in Rodeo, California. These cases resulted in settlements of approximately \$300 million.

Don has authored articles on environmental and pharmaceutical drug issues for Ecology Law Quarterly, Mealey's Emerging Toxic Torts, and Hastings West-Northwest Journal of Environmental Law and Policy. Super Lawyers magazine has recognized Don as a Super Lawyer for Northern California five times. He has lectured to attorneys on science issues in pharmaceutical defect litigation for the American Association of Justice in 2011 (Yaz) and 2013 (ACTOS).

Areas of Practice

Pharmaceutical Defects, Environmental Litigation, Personal Injury

Education

University of California at Berkeley, School of Law (Berkeley Law), Berkeley, California

J.D. - 1979

Honors: Order of the Coif

Tufts University, Medford/Somerville, Massachusetts

B.S. (Magna Cum Laude) - 1974

Bar Admissions

California, 1986

Vermont, 1979

California Supreme Court, 1986

U.S. Court Of Appeals, Ninth Circuit, 1986

U.S. District Court, Northern District of California, 1986

Professional Associations and Memberships

ACTOS MDL Plaintiffs' Steering Committee

Bar Association of San Francisco

Co-Chair, California JCCP Yaz Science Committee, 2010-Present

Federal Science and Expert Witness Committees (Diet Drugs MDL; Baycol MDL; Rezulin MDL)

State Bar of California

VIOXX MDL Chair of the Epidemiology/Clinical Trials Subcommittee

YAZ MDL Federal Court-appointed Science Executive Committee

Published Works

Co-Author with Wendy Fleishman, "The Risky Business of Off-Label Use," TRIAL Magazine, March 2005

Co-Author with William Bernstein, "Effective Use of Class Action Procedures in California Toxic Tort Litigation," West-Northwest Journal of Environmental Law and Policy, No. 3, 1996

"Comment on Joiner: Decision on the Daubert Test of Admissibility of Expert Testimony," 6 Mealey's Emerging Toxic Torts, No. 18, December 1997

"The Plight of American Citizens Injured by Transboundary River Pollution," 8 Ecology Law Quarterly, No. 2, 1979

Honors and Awards

AV Preeminent Peer Review Rated, Martindale-Hubbell

Selected for inclusion by peers in The Best Lawyers in America in the fields of "Mass Tort Litigation/ Class Actions - Plaintiffs, Personal Injury Litigation - Plaintiffs," 2012 - 2024

"Super Lawyer for Northern California," Super Lawyers, 2004, 2006 - 2008, 2014 - 2023

"500 Leading Plaintiff Consumer Lawyers in America," Lawdragon, 2022

"Lawyer of the Year for Mass Tort & Class Action Litigation," Northern California, Best Lawyers, 2022
Legal 500 recommended lawyer, 2013

"Lawdragon Finalist," Lawdragon, 2009 - 2011