



## **Transvaginal Mesh Problems and Claims**

Complications and injuries associated with some defective transvaginal mesh medical devices and/or medical negligence are now coming to light. Successful cases have been the topic of media and news headlines for a number of months. Experts in product safety have described these cases as the worst women's health scandal since the thalidomide drug which was used to treat morning sickness in pregnant women and resulted in their babies having birth defects. It would appear that there are many Irish women suffering in silence and not linking their symptoms with possible negligence and/or a possible defective product.

### **What is Transvaginal mesh?**

It is a medical device made out of plastic mesh tape. It is also known as pelvic mesh or a bladder sling. It is a flexible tape. However, it can harden and stiffen when inside the human body and have a "slicing" effect causing significant problems.

### **What is transvaginal mesh used for?**

Transvaginal mesh is a medical device used to treat pelvic organ prolapse or stress urinary incontinence where the pelvic floor organs have become weak, usually as a result of child birth or because of age.

### **How does transvaginal mesh work?**

The transvaginal mesh tape is passed through the vagina and placed around the urethra to form a sling and act as a support for the bladder. It is designed to be permanent. It is seen as the less invasive surgical treatment, usually being a day case and taking just 20 minutes and a short recovery period when compared with a 6 week recovery period following traditional surgical intervention.



### **What are the complications?**

There are many complications and side effects including but not limited to the following:

- Pain, including pain with sexual intercourse.
- Infection.
- Urinary tract problems.
- Bladder, bowel and blood vessel perforation.
- Erosion of the vaginal tissue.
- Discharge and bleeding.
- Low back pain.
- Pressure in the low abdomen.
- Surgeries or procedures to remove, trim or repair the mesh.

Unfortunately, it is not always as simple as rectifying the above with further surgery. There are many women who have been left with permanent symptoms and a cocktail of medication to treat same.

### **Litigation:**

For many women, a transvaginal mesh implant has been a quick and successful procedure. However, it has not been successful for many other women with an estimated 55,000 women across the globe suing as a result of the complications. The USA re-classified the risk of transvaginal mesh to a high risk medical device in 2012. Many Irish women have had this procedure carried out but did not link their debilitating symptoms to the transvaginal mesh implant until the UK cases started to gain media attention here in Ireland.

### **Taking Action**

If you have suffered complications and injuries following a surgery involving transvaginal mesh, you should not continue to suffer in silence. There has been a huge campaign around awareness in the media so that women who are suffering are supported. Complications and side effects should be reported to the HPRA, which is the body responsible for regulating health products in Ireland. You should also speak to a solicitor and investigate whether there has been any



negligence or defect which has resulted in your current symptoms. You should take action as soon as possible as there are certain time restrictions in law for bringing a case involving medical negligence or defective products.

If you have been affected by any issues raised in this article, you should contact Mrs. Michelle Loughnane, Solicitor, of Richard Grogan & Associates, 9 Herbert Place, Dublin 2 on 01 9695781.

**\*Before acting or refraining from acting on anything in this guide, legal advice should be sought from a solicitor.**

**\*\*In contentious cases, a solicitor may not charge fees or expenses as a portion or percentage of any award of settlement.**