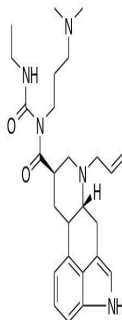

Parkinson's Drug May Cause Addictions



A drug to treat Parkinson's disease has been in the midst of some controversy due to allegations that it may result in an addiction to gambling and sex.

Pfizer has confirmed that it has proposed a settlement for a class action suit by more than 150 patients who claim that they were not warned about the side effects. The case for Cabaser (cabergoline) which was launched in 2008 is up for a hearing in an Australian federal court early next year.

Cabaser is a potent dopamine receptor agonist on D2 receptors. The drug balances levels of dopamine in the brain. Excess levels of dopamine can result in risk-taking behaviour. Cabaser is prescribed to treat restless leg syndrome, a neurological disorder which causes patients to feel the urge to move their legs.

The patients claim that after taking Cabaser, they started gambling away thousands of dollars despite the fact that they were never problem gamblers. Others claim that they developed compulsive sexual behaviour after taking the drug.

The decision still lies in the hands of the federal court. According to Bill Madden, the national practice group leader for Slater & Gordon's medical law division, "There have been cases where settlements have not been approved by the federal court and it would be wise to wait to see what the court has to say. It's interesting legally because of the peculiar effects of the drug, but there were similar claims made about the sleep medication Stillnox and that didn't really seem to go anywhere. However, it would be good to see a case like this settled outside of court, because it would save everyone involved a lot of time and a lot of money."

Source: Guardian

Image Credit: Wikimedia Commons

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