

Lanier Law Firm Client Featured in NBC Investigation of Hospital Infections

The Associated Press

NBC's "Today" show is exposing the growing problem of dirty surgical instruments and related hospital infections following a lengthy investigation that highlights the story of The Lanier Law Firm clients John and Laura Harrison.

Mr. Harrison underwent rotator cuff surgery at Houston's Methodist Hospital in 2009. Within two weeks, he experienced severe pain and swelling that forced him to go to the emergency room. He then learned he was suffering from a severe infection caused by contaminated surgical instruments that were used during his original surgery. Mr.

Harrison has undergone multiple additional surgeries and continues to experience severe pain as a result of the infection and subsequent medical treatments.

An investigation by Methodist and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed six other patients at the hospital who developed the potentially lethal infections. All those cases were linked to an arthroscopic shaver manufactured by San Jose, Calif.-based Stryker Endoscopy.

Last year, the Harrisons sued the hospital and Stryker Endoscopy based on claims of product liability, negligent design, failure to recall, and fraud. The lawsuit, *Harrison, et al. v. Stryker Endoscopy, et al.*, No. 4:12-cv-00079, is pending in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas.

"This is a case about a dirty little secret and dirty little devices," says attorney Mark Lanier, lead counsel for the Harrisons.

"Manufacturers, hospitals and doctors know it's a problem, but no one seems willing to do anything about it." Health care providers regularly reuse medical devices such as surgical forceps, endoscopes, stethoscopes and other equipment on multiple patients. Due to faulty designs and improper instructions, many surgical devices are never properly cleaned and sterilized.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has received dozens of reports of infections caused by reusable medical devices. In July 2009, the FDA warned of instances where pieces of tissue and other contaminants remained even after devices were cleaned using the manufacturer's instructions.

With offices in Houston, Los Angeles, New York, and Palo Alto, The Lanier Law Firm is committed to addressing client concerns with effective and innovative solutions in courtrooms across the country.

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The firm is composed of outstanding trial attorneys with decades of experience handling cases involving pharmaceutical liability, asbestos exposure, intellectual property, business litigation, product liability, maritime law, bad faith insurance claims, and sports and entertainment law.

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