

Recent reports reveal that Avandia cases could end up costing the drug maker, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) between \$1 billion and \$6 billion in settlements, according to the Union Bank of Switzerland. In a financial forecasting report, the bank reported that GSK faces more than 13,000 lawsuits made on behalf of plaintiffs who suffered injury while taking the type-2 diabetes drug.

UBS believes the data on Avandia supports continued use of the drug but believes Congressional pressure may force the drug's removal from the market. US sales of Avandia currently represent only 1 percent of total sales, but the company will most certainly face lawsuit settlements in the area of \$6 billion if the FDA recalls Avandia.

Pending Avandia Cases

There will be two bellwether trials in US federal court, the first of which is scheduled to begin June 1, 2010 in Pennsylvania. A bellwether trial is a legal proceeding in which a small random sampling of cases is tried. The results of that trial are then extrapolated and applied to all other cases.

Avandia lawsuits allege aggressive marketing of Avandia by GSK without adequate warning to patients about the increased cardiovascular risks. The first of the bellwether trials will determine if the heart attack suffered by Brooklyn, NY resident Salvatore Arezzi was related to his use of Avandia over the course of seven years.

A new study worsens Glaxo's case, showing even higher risks of heart attack. Harvard researchers found that Avandia patients were twice as likely to suffer heart attacks as diabetic patients on other medications were. Glaxo's own studies show a 35 to 41 percent increased risk of heart attack. While the Harvard study looked at patient medical records, the GSK sponsored study only reviewed health insurance data.

To be included in rulings that result from the bellwether trials, those with Avandia cases who have not yet consulted an attorney should act now to protect their rights. If you or a loved one were injured from taking Avandia, be sure to contact a skilled drug defect attorney about your case as soon as possible.