

Talcum Powder Fact Sheet



Who is at risk for developing baby powder ovarian cancer?

Over four decades of medical literature document the link between talcum powder use and ovarian cancer. Women who have used talc-based baby powder on a weekly basis face a 33% increased risk of developing ovarian cancer, and women who have used talcum powder on a daily basis face a 41% increased risk for ovarian cancer.

How is Talcum powder dangerous?

When talc products such as baby powder are applied to the genital region, talc particles can travel through the female reproductive system to the ovaries. Talc particles may remain in the ovaries for many years, causing inflammation and creating an environment conducive to the growth of cancer cells. One expert estimates that roughly 10,000 women each year develop ovarian cancer as a result of using baby powder or body powder.

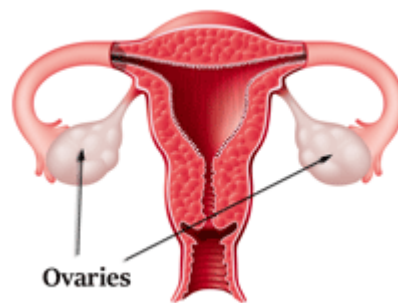
Researchers have known for more than thirty years that the perineal use of talcum powder is associated with an increased risk of ovarian cancer. However, the substance is not regulated in the United States and no product warning labels are attached to talcum powder products. Ovarian cancer is a harmful disease that can result in suffering and death.



Baby Powder Ovarian Cancer Risk

The talcum powder cancer risk has been documented in major medical journals throughout the past four decades. The first inkling that talc increases women's risk for ovarian cancer surfaced in a 1971 report, when a study of patients diagnosed with ovarian cancer revealed talc particles in ovarian tissues. Companies such as the cosmetics corporation Johnson & Johnson and talc mining company Luzenac America and its parent company Rio Tinto Materials, who manufacture and market talcum powder products including women's body powder and baby powder, have argued against the connection between talc and cancer since that earliest finding.

Understanding the Science behind the Talcum Powder Cancer Connection



Talc, the key ingredient in baby powder, is a naturally-occurring mineral that is found throughout the world. Talc is a soft mineral comprised of magnesium, silicon and oxygen. The substance is mined, crushed, dried, and milled for use in consumer products. Talc is used for a variety of household and industrial purposes ranging a food additive, an anti-caking agent, a lubricant, and an astringent. In the case of baby powder, talc is renowned for its ability to absorb moisture, reduce friction and prevent rashes. Talc-based products have been marketed to women for genital hygiene purposes as body powder and genital deodorant sprays. Talc particles may also enter the female reproductive system through tampons, sanitary pads and diaphragms that are dusted with baby powder. Talc particles that reach the ovaries can result in the growth of ovarian cancer cells. Experts estimate that roughly one in five American women applies talcum powder to her genitals on a regular basis.

The decades of research on the role of baby powder in bringing about cancer cell development indicate that women who expose their genital area regularly to talcum powder products are three times as likely to develop ovarian cancer as women who refrain from baby powder use. Research indicates that talc particles in the ovaries cause an inflammatory response, which has a range of medical implications. Among these, inflammation in the ovaries can cause increased cell proliferation and damage to DNA, which can result in the malignant transformation of cells, or ovarian cancer. Talc is poorly soluble, meaning particles from baby powder can remain intact within body tissues for many years.

Baby Powder Ovarian Cancer Research Findings

Following the 1971 study that first detected a connection between talcum powder use and ovarian cancer, many more scientific studies have been published in prominent medical journals such as *Cancer*, *The Lancet*, and *Oncology* throughout the past decades. The National Cancer Institute and the International Union Against Cancer have published similar findings. A description of pivotal studies on the baby powder and ovarian cancer is set forth here:

- **1970s** An article on ovarian cancer caused by talcum powder in *The Lancet* warns, "The potentially harmful effects of talc . . . in the ovary . . . should not be ignored."
- **1992** The *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* publishes a study which finds that regular (weekly) use of baby powder increases a woman's risk of developing ovarian cancer threefold.
- **1997** A study published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* affirms that perineal dusting of talcum powder contributes to the risk of cancer; it suggests talcum genital deodorant sprays contribute to cancer growth as well.
- **2003** A meta-analysis, which compiles and reviews data from 16 previous studies, is published in *Anticancer Research*. Based on research with nearly 12,000 women, the study concludes that perineal baby powder use is associated with a 33% increase in ovarian cancer risk.
- **2008** Harvard epidemiologist Dr. Margaret Gates reaffirms that weekly use of talcum powder for perineal dusting increases the risk of ovarian cancer by 33%. Dr. Gates also asserts that daily use of a product such as Johnson & Johnson's Shower to Shower talcum powder increases the risk of ovarian cancer by 41%.
- **2010** Dr. Gates, along with two other Harvard researchers, publishes a study in the journal *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention* in which the role of talc particles in other endometrial cancer development was investigated. This study reinforces the notion that talc in baby powder is carcinogenic to humans.

The Result of Medical Findings Being Ignored

A failure to warn women about the risks of perineal talc exposure from baby powder has resulted in an estimated 10,000 cases of ovarian cancer each year, estimates Dr. Daniel Cramer, a recognized expert on the subject. In his book "Toxic Beauty", Dr. Samuel Epstein, a leading advocate for baby powder cancer warnings, writes, "Unbelievably, the FDA has recklessly failed to protect us from toxic ingredients in cosmetics and personal-care products for at least six decades." Today many organizations including state departments of health and cancer research agencies recommend using cornstarch-based powders in place of talc baby powder and body powder.

Baby Powder Ovarian Cancer Warnings and News

Cancer Prevention Coalition. In 2008, Dr. Sam Epstein of the Cancer Prevention Coalition, wrote "...the industry and, worse still the FDA, remain recklessly unresponsive to [talcum powder cancer] dangers. The FDA has neither banned the genital use of talcum powder, nor required industry to label it with explicit warnings. This is all the more inexcusable since cosmetic grade starch powder is a readily available safe alternative."

Ovarian Cancer Research Fund. "Use of Talc-based Powder Increases Ovarian Cancer Risk."

WebMD. "The use of talc may increase the risk of ovarian cancer. Talcum powder dusted on the perineum (the area between the vagina and the anus) may reach the ovaries by entering the vagina."

Journal of Cancer Prevention Research. "Genital powder use has been associated with risk of epithelial ovarian cancer in some, but not all, epidemiologic investigations, possibly reflecting the carcinogenic effects of talc particles found in most of these products."

American Cancer Society. "Talcum powder is made from talc, a mineral made up mainly of the elements magnesium, silicon, and oxygen. As a powder, it absorbs moisture well and helps cut down on friction, making it useful for keeping skin dry and helping to prevent rashes. It is widely used in cosmetic products such as baby powder and adult body and facial powders, as well as in a number of other consumer products."

Organic Consumers Association. "Talcum Powder: The Hidden Dangers: You've probably used it, or had it sprinkled on you at some time in your life. It's processed from a soft mineral compound of magnesium silicate and is called talcum powder, or just talc."

New York State Department of Health. "One study suggests that women who have taken the fertility drug clomiphene citrate (Clomid) may have an increased risk of ovarian cancer. Other possible risks being studied are a diet high in fat; exposure to asbestos; and the use of talc (a mineral substance found in talcum powder) near the vaginal area."

Daily Mail. "Women who use talcum powder every day to keep fresh are 40 per cent more likely to develop ovarian cancer, according to alarming research."

FDA. "Talc is an ingredient used in many cosmetics, from baby powder to blush. From time to time, FDA has received questions about its safety and whether talc contains harmful contaminants, such as asbestos."

Baby Powder Ovarian Cancer Lawsuit Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know I know if my ovarian cancer was caused by talcum powder?

In most cases, the doctors who provided you with ovarian cancer treatment focused on fighting the disease rather than looking for its cause. The same tissue samples and pathology reports that were used to diagnose the cancer and determine the best method of treatment can be examined now to determine whether your ovarian tissues contain talc fibers. By reviewing your medical records and sending your pathology reports to a talcum powder ovarian cancer expert, we can determine whether talc may have caused your ovarian cancer. Talc fibers can be found in the ovaries, fallopian tubes and in the pelvic lymph nodes for years after entering the female reproductive system. Talc fibers take years to disintegrate; in fact, intact fibers cause inflammation in the ovaries, which is believed to result in a higher rate of cancer. If talc fibers are present in your ovarian tissues, our researchers will detect them. Individuals who have used talcum powder or talc-based baby powder on a regular basis in the past are most likely to develop ovarian cancer.

How long have medical experts known there was a link between talcum powder and ovarian cancer?

As early as the 1970s medical researchers in the field of ovarian cancer detected talc fibers in the ovarian tissues of women diagnosed with cancer. In 2003, a meta-analysis, examining 16 previous talcum powder ovarian cancer research, was published in *Anticancer Research*, confirming that weekly use of baby powder increases the risk of ovarian cancer by 33%. In 2008, a study examined the frequency of talcum powder use and rates of cancer, finding that women who use talcum powder on a daily basis have an even greater chance of developing ovarian cancer. In short, scientists and doctors have been aware of the link between baby powder and cancer for decades, yet the substance is still unregulated in the United States.

Who can make a baby powder cancer claim or file a talcum powder ovarian cancer lawsuit?

Women, or the family members of women, who have been diagnosed with ovarian cancer and have a history of using talcum powder products for perineal hygiene may have grounds to make a talcum powder cancer claim by filing a baby powder ovarian cancer lawsuit.

Does it cost anything for you to review my case?

We will always listen to your circumstances and give you our analysis of your case without any cost or further obligation.

Who is most at risk for developing baby powder ovarian cancer?

Many studies conducted over the course of the past four decades contribute to the body of research indicating the link between ovarian cancer and talcum powder use. Women who have used talc-based baby powder on a weekly basis face a 33% increase in their risk of developing ovarian cancer, and women who have used talcum powder on a daily basis are thought to face a 41% increase in risk for ovarian cancer.

What are the dangers of talcum powder ovarian cancer?

Ovarian cancer is a deadly disease that is expected to cause approximately 14,000 fatalities this year. Few symptoms are likely to surface in the early stages of ovarian cancer, when it is easiest to treat. By the time symptoms of talcum powder ovarian cancer become apparent for many patients,

the disease has spread beyond the ovaries and into other tissues and organs. Once the disease has spread, ovarian cancer becomes much more difficult to treat.



How much will it cost to file a baby powder ovarian cancer lawsuit?

We will represent all persons involved in a talcum powder cancer lawsuit on a contingency basis, meaning there are never any legal fees unless we win compensation in your case.

Aren't most drug and products liability lawsuits just class action lawsuits where the plaintiff receives very little money?

No. In a class action, everyone's damages are the same and the damages are generally very small. This is not the case with medical product liability claims. Each person's damages are independently reviewed, assessed and compensation obtained in an amount reflective of the person's injuries.

Many medical product liability cases are handled as a MDL, or Multi-District Litigation, where cases may be consolidated to expedite the litigation process; but ultimately, each case goes to trial and/or a settlement is reached on an individual case basis, depending on the person's damages.

We're not the type of people who sue; do we really need to file a lawsuit?

If a member of your family suffered a serious injury or health problem as a result of a defective product or dangerous drug, long-term, or even life-long, medical care may be required. This could be incredibly expensive and since medical costs are continually rising may be largely unknown at the time of settlement or trial. If a member of your family died due to a defective product or dangerous drug, no amount of money can undo that wrong. It is our fervent hope that every defective product, drug or other medication lawsuit we file can serve to make the manufacturer take note of the loss and pain its product has caused. When that fails to make a company take action in the form of a product recall, greater warnings about its use and ultimately making safer products, we rely on their profit motivation to make them do the right thing. Unfortunately, in all too many cases it is only the fear of lawsuits and large settlements and verdicts that makes a company become a better corporate citizen.

How much time do I have to file a baby powder cancer lawsuit?

Most states have talcum powder cancer lawsuit time limits; however, the majority of all persons having been diagnosed with ovarian cancer will fall within those time limits if they contact an attorney in the near future.