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## BUSINESS NEWS

# UPDATE 1-Jury awards woman \$7.76 mln punitive damages for J&J mesh



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Feb 28 (Reuters) - A New Jersey jury on Thursday ordered Johnson & Johnson to pay \$7.76 million in punitive damages to a South Dakota nurse who claimed harm from the company's now-recalled Prolift vaginal mesh.

The diversified healthcare company said in a statement that it would "vigorously" appeal the award from the jury. On Monday, the panel of six women and three men awarded the same woman \$3.35 million in other compensation, saying J&J failed to adequately warn her doctors of potential dangers from the vaginal mesh implant made by J&J's Ethicon subsidiary.

It was the first case among some 1,800 vaginal mesh cases pending in New Jersey against Ethicon and J&J and could have an impact on thousands of lawsuits against other manufacturers of similar products.

The lawsuit, in Atlantic City Superior Court, was brought by Linda Gross, 47, of Watertown, South Dakota, in November 2008. It alleged that the Gyncare Prolift vaginal mesh was not safe and that J&J and Ethicon were liable, among other things, for defective design, manufacture, warnings and instructions.

The product, before being taken off the U.S. market last year, was used to treat pelvic organ collapse, a condition for which the plaintiff, Linda Gross, was treated in November 2008.

"Linda Gross cannot turn back the clock and make her misery and pain disappear," her attorney Adam Slater said, adding that the jury decided that J&J and its Ethicon unit "should be severely punished financially."

J&J shares were little affected by the court setback, slipping 0.1 percent to \$76.25 in early afternoon trading on the New York Stock Exchange.

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	Price	Change	%Change
JNJ	77.20	0.50	0.65%

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