

Thursday, August 23, 2001

Class-action suit filed over Baycol

A Fort Worth attorney filed a class-action lawsuit in Tarrant County on Wednesday involving Baycol, the cholesterol-lowering drug pulled from shelves this month after it was linked to the deaths of 52 patients.

William K. Berenson filed the lawsuit on the behalf of Tina C. Presley, a Fort Worth woman in her 70s. Berenson said he believes many potential plaintiffs are unaware of the drug's troubles.

"If I had taken Baycol, I'd be mad as hell," Berenson said. "This is a serious problem. They should do a better job researching these products before they unleash them on us."

Bayer recalled Baycol this month because of concerns that it caused muscle weakness, and in some cases liver failure.

Several other class-action lawsuits have been filed against Bayer, a German pharmaceutical and chemical conglomerate. The drug was approved by the FDA in 1997.

Berenson filed a class-action lawsuit because the damages suffered by each individual may be relatively small, but the expense and burden of individual litigation would make it difficult or impossible for them to pursue the case, he said.