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Suits & Deals

Patient Left Blind in One Eye by Surgery Recovers \$1.2 Million From Doctors

New Jersey Law Journal
December 11, 2009

A woman who claimed she lost sight in one eye because of errors by anesthesiologists and an ophthalmologist accepted \$1.2 million on Dec. 2 to settle her suit, *Santiago v. Trotta*.

Natividad Santiago of Miami flinched during cataract surgery at Meadowlands Hospital on Oct. 24 and a needle pierced her left eye, causing her to go blind in that eye, according to a suit in Hudson County filed by **Adam Slater** of **Mazie Slater Katz & Freeman** in Roseland.



Adam Slater

The suit alleged that Santiago moved because she wasn't properly anesthetized and that surgeon Nicholas Trotta, who should have noticed the problem, was to blame, along with professionals from the Meadowlands Anesthesia Associates.

The doctor agreed to pay \$1 million and the anesthesia company paid \$200,000, Slater says.

Alan Baratz of **Weiner Lesniak** in Parsippany, who represented the doctor, and **Anthony Juliano** of **Brach Eichler** in Roseland, who represented the anesthesiology group, did not return calls.

Slater says the doctor asserted that if anyone erred it was the anesthesiologists, who argued that complications like the one in this case can occur through no one's fault.

— By Henry Gottlieb

\$1.2M for Late-Diagnosed Glaucoma

Walsh v. Ceran: An optometrist's patient agreed to a \$1.2 million settlement on Nov. 20 in his suit charging that the doctor failed to diagnose his glaucoma timely.

Mark Walsh of Belvidere, now 39, alleged that Dr. Paul Ceran of Morristown deviated from accepted standards of care by not testing for glaucoma during their seven-year patient-doctor relationship.

Walsh began seeing Ceran in 1999. When his vision worsened in late 2005, Ceran referred him to a specialist, who discovered glaucoma in the right eye, with a dramatic reduction in visual field. The condition is irreversible, says his lawyer, **Robert Gold** of **Gold, Albanese & Barletti** in Morristown.

Walsh, whose job is reviewing contracts for Picatinny Arsenal, suffers from tunnel vision, balance infirmity and loss of depth perception, Gold says.

Ceran said in a deposition that he believed Walsh had a sudden onset of glaucoma, but the plaintiff's medical expert opined that Ceran should have routinely performed dilated ocular examinations and a gonioscopy, says Gold.

Ceran's lawyer, **Peter Korn** of **McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter** in Morristown, confirms the settlement.

— By Charles Toutant

\$1.2M for Fatal Automobile Crash

Estate of Romanella v. Cervantes: The estates of a Monroe couple who died from injuries in a 2006 collision settled their claims for a combined \$1.2 million on Nov. 18.

On Dec. 31, 2006, Giuseppe Romanella, 66, and Patricia, 63, were killed when their Honda Acura was broadsided by a

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