



## CANCER PREVENTION COALITION

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## PRESS RELEASE

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## CANCER EXPERT CALLS DOW BREAST IMPLANT ADS DECEPTIVE

### *Cancer Risks To Be Detailed at Silicone Device Conference*

Washington, D.C. - Dr. Samuel Epstein, Professor of Environmental and Occupational Medicine at the University of Illinois (at Chicago) School of Public Health and internationally recognized authority on cancer prevention, will present evidence, including an unpublished Dow study, on the cancer risks of silicone breast implants at the May 13 *Silicone Device Conference*.

"Recent Dow Corning advertisements on the safety of breast implants are deceptive in the extreme and are highly unethical," commented Dr. Epstein.

Dr. Epstein will offer a detailed critique of the Dow ads, in addition to a wide range of other evidence on the cancer risks of breast implants, at the conference to be held at 9:00 a.m. at the Washington Renaissance Hotel, 999 9th St. N.W. Washington, DC. He will charge the implant industry and government with a cover-up of these risks to some two million women. Highlights will include:

- **Unpublished Dow Corning studies discovered in a 1987 FDA inspection showed that silicone gel injection induced highly malignant tumors in rats.** FDA scientists concluded in a confidential memorandum that: "While there is no direct proof that silicone causes cancer in humans, there is considerable evidence that it can do so." Accordingly, it was recommended that "a medical alert be issued to warn the public of the possibility of malignancy following long term implant(ation)."
- **A 1994 report in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute confirmed the carcinogenicity of silicone gel in experiments with mice.**

- more -

**A 1989 confidential FDA report admitted " numerous case reports of (breast) cancer"** long after implantation. The report concluded that population studies, claimed as proof of safety by industry and plastic surgeons, are too short term and flawed to "negate the potential risk of cancer." The report also warned of the "possibility of worsened diagnosis" and prognosis when implanted women developed breast cancer. These conclusions were fully confirmed in a 1993 congressionally-mandated report by the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

- **Large scale use of foam-wrapped implants ignored evidence published in the early 1960's by NCI's leading authority on carcinogenesis, the late Dr. Wilhelm Hueper.** Hueper's studies showed that foam gradually degrades and induces malignant tumors in rats. He warned: "Since the polyurethane plastics have been used in cosmetic surgery. . . these observations are of practical importance. . . (and) should caution against (their) indiscriminate use."
- **Over 350,000 women with silicone implants wrapped in industrial polyurethane foam to reduce scarring are at higher risk of cancer.** Polyurethane foam is manufactured from the carcinogenic toluene diisocyanate (TDI) which breaks down into another carcinogen, TDA. It should be further noted that TDA was removed from hair dyes by the cosmetic industry in 1971 following discovery of its carcinogenicity.
- **In 1985, a Bristol-Myers subsidiary admitted** that: "Degradation products of polyurethane are toxic and in some cases carcinogenic. . . The breakdown products of the fuzzy implant material may well be carcinogenic. How would anyone defend himself in a malpractice suit of a patient developed a breast malignancy."
- **At a 1985 industry-sponsored conference, a leading plastic surgeon cautioned that "foam could be a time bomb. . . (in view of its) carcinogenic potential. Surgeons should not go on implanting."** Following identification of TDA in foam, a Bristol-Myers employee warned ". . . there is pretty solid evidence that (it) is a carcinogen. The question is does PU foam. . . release TDA in the human breast to an extent that causes an unacceptable risk of cancer."

Dr. Epstein will urge that the FDA issue a medical alert to all implanted women, with priority for those with foam implants. He also will urge that these women should be offered a program of comprehensive medical surveillance and be given the option of having their implants removed, both at industry's expense. "Dow Corning and other implant makers should be responsible for all costs," Dr. Epstein said.

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Dr. Epstein is the chair of the Cancer Prevention Coalition (CPC), a Chicago-based, national coalition of leading independent experts on cancer prevention and public health, together with citizen activists, organized labor, and public interest and women's cancer groups.

The Silicone Device Conference is sponsored by the TRIAD SILICONE NETWORK (910) 854-5338. Founded by Ms. Jill Stone, it is one of the leading advocacy organizations for women with breast implants.