



# Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella FAQ



## Free Case Evaluation

To contact an experienced female injury attorney for a free case evaluation, please visit us online at [YazBirthControlInjuryLaw.com](http://YazBirthControlInjuryLaw.com) or call us toll-free at 1-888-321-1510 and ask to speak to attorney Paulina do Amaral.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella

Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, LLP, has successfully represented hundreds of injured patients and the families of loved ones who died while taking prescription drugs with undisclosed and dangerous side effects. Today, we are representing women prescribed Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella who suffered serious, and in some cases, fatal side effects. We have obtained confidential and favorable settlements for many women injured by these birth control drugs.

### 1. What are Yaz and Yasmin?

Yaz and Yasmin are comparatively new prescription birth control pills manufactured and marketed by Bayer Healthcare Pharmaceuticals. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration first approved Yasmin in 2001 and then approved its similar sister, Yaz in 2006.

Yaz and Yasmin contain nearly the same active ingredients: ethinyl estradiol, an estrogen component and drospirenone, a progestin. Specifically, what makes Yasmin and Yaz different from many other birth control pills is their progestin ingredient: drospirenone is a fourth generation progestin that previously was never used in birth control pills sold in the U.S.

### 2. What other drugs contain drospirenone?

Ocella is a generic version of Yasmin that received FDA approval in 2008. Other birth control pills containing drospirenone include Gianvi and Loryna (generic versions of Yaz), Syeda and Zarah (generic versions of Yasmin), and Beyaz and Safyral.

### 3. What are the side effects of birth control drugs?

Since the 1960s, doctors and researchers have found that women taking estrogen, the basic ingredient in birth control pills, increased their risk of developing blood clots.

Blood clots in coronary arteries can cause heart attacks. Blood clots in the legs can cause pain, break off and travel to the lungs where they can cause potentially fatal blood clots in the lungs called pulmonary emboli. Blood clots traveling to the brain can cause strokes, and deaths. If the blood clots go undetected or untreated, they can be lethal.

Drospirenone, the progestin component in Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella, is a diuretic – these are any drug or natural aid that promote the formation of urine and excretion of water from the body. It can also contribute to heart rhythm disturbances, increased blood potassium levels called hyperkalemia, and can cause sudden death.

### 4. What adverse health effects have been linked to Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella?

The reported adverse health effects linked to use of Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella include blood

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Newsletter from the national law firm of LIEFF CABRASER HEIMANN & BERNSTEIN, LLP

clots, deep vein thrombosis, strokes, heart attacks, gall bladder damage, kidney problems, and sudden cardiac death.

## 5. Have many women reported injuries due to taking Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella?

Yes. The FDA's adverse event database for Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella reveals a substantial number of serious adverse events associated with these drugs, including more than 59 deaths where the women were taking Yaz, Yasmin, or Ocella.

Because of underreporting, the actual number of women who suffered side effects associated with these medications is likely many, many more than reported.

## 6. Why are Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella causing these injuries?

Complaints filed by Lieff Cabraser clients against the manufacturers of Yaz, Yasmin, and Ocella allege that drospirenone, when combined with estrogen, has adverse effects that are more dangerous than earlier generations of oral contraceptives.

In April 2011, two medical studies were published finding that women who took birth control pills with drospirenone, including Yasmin and Yaz, have a higher risk for developing potentially serious

blood clots than women who took oral contraceptives without drospirenone. In one study, there was a three-fold greater risk of blood clots.

The FDA also funded a study published in October 2011 which found that patients who took Yaz and other drospirenone-containing birth control pills were 74% more likely to suffer from blood clots compared to women who took older birth control pills not containing drospirenone.

## 7. What actions has the FDA taken this year concerning the safety of Yaz, Yasmin and Ocella?

In April, 2012, the FDA announced that Yaz birth control pills, and other newer generation birth control pills containing the synthetic hormone drospirenone, must be sold with updated warning labels. The new warning labels will disclose that some studies indicate patients taking birth control with the synthetic hormone drospirenone have up to a three-fold increase in the risk of developing blood clots compared to patients taking birth control pills with no drospirenone.

## 8. Why is Bayer legally responsible for injuries suffered by women taking Yaz and Yasmin?

Manufacturers of prescription drugs have a duty to patients to produce safe products, and to warn patients and their doctors of any adverse health effects.

Lawsuits filed against Bayer charge that it sold Yaz Yasmin without adequate warnings about the increased risk of serious injuries and, specifically, failed to warn doctors and patients that Yaz and Yasmin are more dangerous than other oral birth control pills on the market.

Patients have further charged that Bayer improperly advertised and over-promoted Yaz for uses such as treating acne and PMDD, while knowing that the risks of such use outweighed any benefits Yaz may have for acne sufferers and those with symptoms of PMDD.



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The Daily Journal

### 9. I believe I suffered an injury due to taking Yaz, Yasmin, or Ocella. How quickly must I hire an attorney?

If you or a loved one were just injured, you should not feel pressured to make an immediate decision about hiring counsel. Focusing on restoring your health or mourning the loss of loved ones should take precedence over liability issues at this difficult time.

However, keep in mind that each state imposes a deadline for filing lawsuits. This deadline is known as the statute of limitations, which in certain states is one year from the date of the accident. There might also be other deadlines imposed by state law that may require action sooner than one year.

### 10. Will I have to pay a fee for your review of my case?

No. We do not charge to review your case. If we decide we can represent you and you wish to retain Lief Cabraser as your law firm, we will discuss our contingency fees (calculated as a percentage of the recovery we obtain) and then provide a written contract to be agreed upon.

### 11. What are my legal rights after an injury?

In most states, an injured person may file a case for negligence, failure to warn of known dangers, design defects, and other legal claims for compensation. In wrongful death cases, most states provide that the decedent's spouse and children are entitled to sue for damages. If there is no spouse, then a child (or guardian of a child) may sue. If there is neither a spouse nor child, then the decedent's parents are entitled to sue. After the parents, siblings are next in line under the law.

### 12. How long will a lawsuit take?

We cannot give any guarantees as to when your case will be resolved. First we must undertake a thorough investigation of the facts of

your case. In some instances, a case will settle to our client's satisfaction shortly after it is filed, or perhaps even before. For many women, we have been able to reach confidential, favorable settlements with Bayer for the injuries they suffered.

Rest assured, Lief Cabraser works swiftly and efficiently to obtain the maximum compensation for our clients and to bring each case to a successful conclusion. We do not charge our clients hourly fees and earn no compensation for ourselves until you receive your recovery.

### 13. How do I select an attorney to represent me?

You should seek a lawyer who has substantial experience in successfully handling similar cases. It is important to not only verify the reputation and experience of the law firm as a whole, but to be sure that your case will be handled by individuals with appropriate experience.

In suits involving dangerous prescription drugs, a case can be expensive to litigate and typically requires the hiring of experts to assist your case. You should choose a law firm with substantial financial resources to conduct the case through trial and appeal if necessary.

### 14. What recovery will I add?

In most jurisdictions, if you suffered a personal injury and the defendant is found liable, the defendant is responsible for paying for your medical care, both past and expected, your past and future lost earnings, and an amount to compensate you for pain and suffering. Your spouse also might be entitled to an award.

If a loved one died, the recovery usually is based on the amount of economic support and services that you lost, plus, in some jurisdictions, an amount designed to compensate for your grief and mental anguish and loss of association. We have economists who specialize in evaluating these injuries and calculating the lump-sum amount to determine a monetary compensation for your loss.

If the conduct that caused the injury was

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- Our injury lawyers have years of experience successfully representing clients in catastrophic personal injury cases. We provide each client with high-level individualized representation.
- We employ a team of dedicated nurses, researchers, legal assistants and case clerks to assist our attorneys in the investigation and prosecution of each case. Our firm has six full-time nurses, including ones with decades of experience working with patients.

Lief Cabraser's awards include





## Contact Lief Cabraser

If you or a loved one have been injured or killed as a result of taking Yaz, Yasmin, or Ocella, please visit us online at [YazBirthControlInjuryLaw.com](http://YazBirthControlInjuryLaw.com) or call us toll-free at 1-888-321-1510 and ask to speak to attorney Paulina do Amaral. Our female personal injury attorneys and legal nurse consultants will promptly review your case for no charge or obligation on your part.

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egregious, you may also be entitled to an award of punitive damages in certain states.

### 15. How will you handle my case?

As our client, you possess the direction and control over the case. For example, if Bayer should make an offer to settle the case, we will promptly inform you. We will advise whether or not you should accept the offer based on the law and facts of your case. The decision, however, will be yours alone to make.

If you agree to retain our firm, we will prosecute your case as a personal injury lawsuit. You will be assigned an individual attorney who will keep you regularly informed as to the status of your case. At the same time, our attorneys work as a team, sharing evidence and following a strategic plan for the Yaz birth control litigation. In addition, we have multiple nurses, legal assistants, scientific analysts and case clerks on staff to assist our attorneys, helping to gather the evidence necessary to prove your case and for you to obtain the full compensation you are entitled to under the law.

### 16. Why don't I just contact Bayer and try to work out a settlement with the company?

It is usually inadvisable to try to resolve a serious injury or wrongful death case on your own. An injury may involve multiple parties and questions concerning what happened, who was legally responsible, and how the matter should be resolved. At Lief Cabraser, our attorneys are trained and have the expertise to evaluate your case and advise you of your rights. Without these experts, you may never know the true value of your case or gather the evidence to show Bayer's alleged misconduct.

It is important to understand that corporations and their insurers employ the services of expert lawyers that seek to avoid responsibility or at least to minimize the payments that will be made to the victims and families. In contrast, it is our duty and our job to identify all responsible parties, bring a legal action on your behalf to maximize the compensation available under the law, and obtain justice for you.

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Disclaimer: This document is not intended to provide medical advice. Any questions specific to your health should be posed to your physician. The hiring of an attorney is an important decision that should not be based solely upon promotional materials. Before you decide to retain us, ask us to send you additional free written information about our qualifications and experience. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome.