

Investigating corporate wrongdoing and
government failures that harm our health



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Johnson & Johnson talc baby powder asbestos: key facts

Stacy Malkan

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Johnson & Johnson talc asbestos papers

Stacy Malkan

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“Documents released at the talc trials suggest that J&J knew for decades that its talc supplies could be contaminated with asbestos, and that the company ramped up its marketing to African American women and other high-use groups.”

J&J Was Alerted to Risk of Asbestos in Talc in '70s, Files Show

- Documents unsealed in suit show traces of carcinogen in mine
- J&J's tests going back to 1972 find no traces of asbestos

Johnson & Johnson knew for decades that asbestos lurked in its Baby Powder

A REUTERS INVESTIGATION

Johnson & Johnson Has a Baby Powder Problem

More than 1,000 women are suing the company for covering up a cancer risk.

Special Report: As Baby Powder concerns mounted, J&J focused marketing on minority, overweight women

By Chris Kirkham and Lisa Girion

April 9, 2019 6:07 AM PDT · Updated 6 years ago

- 1992 BABY POWDER CATEGORY ACTIVITY -

J&J papers posted here:

<https://usrtk.org/cosmetics/johnson-talc-asbestos-papers/>

JOHNSON'S Baby Powder

- No dedicated advertising
- Damaging negative publicity on talc and inhalation, and talc and ovarian cancer
- No new product introductions
- Promoted as part of JOHNSON'S 100th Anniversary
- Value packs; light couponing

2. Investigate ethnic (African American, Hispanic) opportunities to grow the franchise.

- Johnson's Baby Powder has a high usage rate among African Americans (52.0%) and among Hispanics (37.6%). Additionally usage indices are high for African American and Hispanic females for JBP talc (139 and 101 respectively). Hispanic females also have a high index (151) against JBP cornstarch. The brand can increase volume in 1993 by targeting these groups.

The brand will institute an adult hispanic media program and potentially launch an adult Black print effort.

The opportunity – 2007 focus areas

Connect with high-propensity consumers of powder with the right message to make powder relevant again,

The right time

*Focus on summer usage
When it is hot and humid*

The right place

*Under developed
geographical
areas with hot weather,
and higher
AA population*

1. Fitness
Conscious

2. Overweight

3. African-
American

Drive trial

*Among high propensity
consumers pre-disposed
towards benefits of powder*

The right message

*Identify the right
message*



responsible
investor

Shareholder proposal for racial justice audit:

<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/200406/000121465922004208/b322224px14a6g.htm>

Shareholders approve racial justice audit proposal at Johnson & Johnson

The New York Times

Johnson & Johnson investors reject proposal to end global talc sales.

The shareholder resolution, which had urged the company to pull talc-based baby powder from shelves around the world, stemmed from concerns about asbestos contamination.

Civil Rights Audit update from AirBnB:

<https://news.airbnb.com/sixyearadupdate/>

Today, we are sharing a new update on our work to fight discrimination and build inclusion in the Airbnb community.

This update includes the first data from Project Lighthouse, an initiative we launched in 2020 to uncover and address disparities in how people of color experience our platform, and how we are using these findings to guide our work to fight discrimination and make Airbnb more open and inclusive.

Project Lighthouse was developed in partnership with Color Of Change, the nation's largest online racial justice organization, and with input from other national civil rights and privacy organizations.



Civil Rights Audit standards:

<https://www.policylink.org/civil-rights-audit-standards>

More facts about J&J talc trials and product scandals:

<https://usrtk.org/cosmetics/johnson-talc-baby-powder-asbestos/>

Risperdal: Johnson & Johnson's subsidiary, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, faced lawsuits related to its antipsychotic drug Risperdal. The company was accused of downplaying the risks of gynecomastia (male breast growth) in young boys and not properly disclosing side effects. Several multi-million-dollar settlements were reached. In October 2019, a Philadelphia jury [awarded \\$8 billion in punitive damages](#) to a man claiming his use of Risperdal when he was a boy caused abnormal breast enlargement.

For a deep dive into the Risperdal lawsuits, see Steven Brill's reporting on [America's Most Admired Lawbreaker](#). Brill reports, "Over the course of 20 years, Johnson & Johnson created a powerful drug, promoted it illegally to children and the elderly, covered up the side effects and made billions of dollars." The article explains the financial incentives corporations like J&J have for paying settlements and jury awards, rather than taking dangerous products off the shelves.

America's most admired lawbreaker:

<https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/miracleindustry/americas-most-admired-lawbreaker/>

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