

## Ureteral damage caused by fibroid tumor removal

Henderson County (Ky) Circuit Court

A woman presented to her Ob/Gyn with abdominal pain. Test results revealed that the pain was linked to uterine fibroid tumors, which were immediately removed surgically without incident.



Postoperatively, however, the patient complained of a urinary tract infection (UTI), and a follow-up exam showed damage to her left ureter. Despite efforts to repair the injury,

the woman continues to complain of recurrent UTIs.

In suing, the patient argued that if the surgeon had properly mobilized her bladder and located her left ureter, she would not have suffered ureteral damage.

The physician contended that ureteral damage was a known complication of the procedure. He added that the injury was later identified and treated, and that the patient made a full recovery.

■ The jury awarded the plaintiff \$59,261.

## Misplaced suture leads to nerve damage, foot drop

Middlesex County (Mass) Superior Court

A 52-year-old woman presented to her Ob/Gyn for a hysterectomy and bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy, along with a left sacrospinous ligament fixation to correct a prolapsed uterus with a prolapsed vagina. Postoperatively, the patient complained of pain in her left buttock and left leg, as well as weakness in her toes and left leg. After a neurologist

was consulted, the patient was advised that observation was the best course of action. Later, she developed foot drop. Subsequent examination determined that the woman's symptoms stemmed from a misplaced suture near or through the pudendal vessels and sciatic nerve.

In suing, the patient alleged that the Ob/Gyn failed to perform the surgery within the standard of care and did not exercise caution while suturing.

The Ob/Gyn contended that the patient relied on a neurologist to observe her condition. The neurologist, however, claimed he was unaware that foot drop was a potential complication of a sacrospinous ligament fixation.

■ The case against the Ob/Gyn settled for \$631,000. A suit is still pending against defendant neurologist.

## Did missed preeclampsia lead to maternal, infant death?

Summit County (Ohio) Court of Common Pleas

A 27-year-old woman presented to a hospital at 32 weeks' gestation. She suffered a placental abruption that resulted in the fetus' death and developed anemia that required a blood transfusion. However, she refused the procedure due to religious beliefs and died several days later.

In suing, the patient's family claimed that the woman's signs of preeclampsia went unrecognized by the physician. In addition, they claimed that there were treatment alternatives to a blood transfusion that were not made available to her.

The physicians argued that the woman's preeclampsia symptoms were unclear, and that it was her refusal to receive a blood transfusion that caused her demise.

■ The case settled for \$1 million. ■