

Press Release: For Immediate Release

## **Iraq War Veteran Suffers Liver Failure After Taking Antibiotic Ketek®**

New Brunswick, NJ – *February 9, 2007* – The first personal injury lawsuit involving the antibiotic Ketek®, was filed today in Middlesex County, against the drug's manufacturer Sanofi-aventis, by attorneys for Sergeant Charles ("Chuck") Gregg, a veteran of both the 1990 Gulf War and the current war in Iraq. In February 2006, one year after returning home from active military duty in Iraq, Gregg was prescribed the antibiotic Ketek® for treatment of bronchitis. The lawsuit alleges that Sgt. Gregg suffered liver failure and permanent liver damage due to drug-induced hepatitis after taking Ketek®.

Ketek®, a synthetic antibiotic manufactured and marketed by Sanofi-aventis (Bridgewater, NJ), is used to treat strains of sinusitis, bronchitis, and community acquired pneumonia. Ketek® has been identified in multiple post-market reports of serious liver damage and liver failure since it entered the European market in 2001 and the U.S. market in 2004. In July 2006, the FDA required Sanofi-aventis to change the Ketek® label to warn of liver damage and possible death, as risks associated with Ketek®.

Gregg's lawsuit alleges that for him, and many others who took the drug before July 2006, the warning came too late – Gregg had already sustained liver failure from taking Ketek® to treat his bronchitis. The lawsuit alleges that Sanofi included warnings of risk of liver failure and possible death as early as January 2006 on the product sold in Europe. Sgt. Gregg alleges that those same warnings should have been given to him and other U.S. patients, who would not have taken Ketek® had they been warned of the risks of liver failure and possible death.

During an FDA Advisory Committee hearing in December 2006, Sanofi-aventis maintained that Ketek® was safe and effective for its indicated uses. The FDA recommended that marketing Ketek® for treatment of sinusitis and bronchitis be discontinued and that a "black box" warning for liver failure and possible death be added to the Ketek® label.

*For more information about this lawsuit and potential injuries linked to Ketek®, contact Ron Michael Meneo, Esq. at The Meneo Law Group (888-276-3030) or James J. McHugh, Esq. at Lopez McHugh, LLP ((877-703-7070).*