



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

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NEWS RELEASE

Dr. Abdur Razzak Tai was charged today by Indictment¹ with 13 counts of mail fraud and wire fraud in connection with a scheme to submit fraudulent Fen-Phen claims, announced United States Attorney Zane David Memeger. Tai was charged in connection with his review of the echocardiograms of more than 1,100 patients who filed claims with the American Home Product Settlement Trust in Philadelphia. According to the indictment, Tai falsely certified that these patients' tests showed that they had sustained heart damage whereas, in fact, many of these claimants had not been harmed.

As set forth in the indictment, Pondimin (also known as fenfluramine), and Redux (also known as dexfenfluramine), were prescription diet drugs that were distributed through doctors and weight loss clinics. When Pondimin and/or Redux were taken in combination with Phentermine, it was popularly referred to as Fen-Phen. On September 15, 1997, American Home Products Corporation, later known as Wyeth (collectively "Wyeth"), withdrew the diet drugs Pondimin and Redux (the "Diet Drugs") from the market. Prior to 1997, and continuing to the present, individuals who had ingested Pondimin and/or Redux, alone, or in combination with Phentermine, filed individual lawsuits and class actions in federal and state courts against Wyeth and others, alleging that the use of the Diet Drugs had, or may have, adversely affected their health. To resolve that litigation, Wyeth entered into a class action settlement, which established a Trust to pay benefits to persons injured by Fen-Phen with money contributed by Wyeth.

It is charged that Dr. Tai entered into agreements with lawyers who represented persons who believed that they had been injured by taking Fen-Phen. Under these agreements, Dr. Tai agreed to read echocardiograms of the lawyers' clients to determine whether they qualified for compensation from the Trust. For at least one lawyer, Dr. Tai was paid a set fee of \$100 for each echocardiogram that he read. In addition, the indictment charges that Tai was to be compensated \$1,500 for each claimant who qualified for benefits when that patient's claim was paid. The indictment charges that Dr. Tai wrote reports and signed certifications attesting that claimants had suffered heart damage on some occasions when he knew that the tests showed that they had not and, on other occasions, when he knew that he had not personally reviewed the test results to

¹An Indictment or Information is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

determine whether they had suffered heart damage. The indictment charges that, despite his knowledge, Dr. Tai certified that these patients qualified for settlement benefits worth up to hundreds of thousands of dollars each.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR YEAR OF BIRTH
Abdur Razzak Tai	Orlando, FL	77 years old

If convicted the defendant faces a maximum possible sentence of 260 years imprisonment, a \$3.25 million fine, 3 years supervised release and \$1,300 special assessment.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Paul G. Shapiro.

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