

FDA WARNING: NZU, A MORNING SICKENESS "REMEDY" MAY CONTAIN HIGH LEVELS OF LEAD/ARSENIC

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On December 31, 2009, the [FDA](#) issued a [warning](#) to consumers and medical professionals, "especially pregnant or breastfeeding women, to avoid consuming a product called "Nzu", taken as a traditional remedy for morning sickness, because of the potential health risks from high levels of lead and arsenic, noted on laboratory analysis by Texas DSHS. Exposure to lead can result in a number of harmful effects, and a developing child is particularly at risk of effects on the brain and nervous system. Arsenic is a carcinogen, and excessive long-term exposure to it has been associated with a range of adverse health effects, including cancers of the urinary bladder, lung and skin. Nzu, which is sold at African specialty stores is also called Calabash clay, Calabar stone, Mabele, Argile and La Craie. It generally resembles balls of clay or mud and is usually sold in small plastic bags with a handwritten label identifying it as "Nzu" or "Salted Nzu." Anyone who has been ingesting the product should contact their health care provider."

Any adverse events that may be related to use should be reported to the FDA's MedWatch Safety Information and Adverse Event Reporting Program online by clicking [here](#) or by phone at 1-800-332-1088.

If you have any questions about injuries related to this medication, or any other medication, you can call our firm for more information about your legal rights. Click [here](#) to contact us online or call us at 202-463-3030.

About the author:

Catherine Bertram is board certified in civil trials and was recently nominated as a 2010 Super Lawyer for Washington, D.C. Ms. Bertram has 20 years of trial experience and is unique in that she was formerly the Director of Risk Management for Georgetown University Hospital so she brings a wealth of knowledge to her practice including how hospitals should be run and what doctors and nurses can do to protect patients. She is a partner with the firm and devotes her practice to the representation of patients and families of loved ones who have been injured or lost due to medical errors. Ms. Bertram lectures regularly to lawyers and health care providers, nationally and locally, regarding patient safety, medical negligence and other related issues. She has also recently published a chapter in a medical textbook. She can be reached by email at cbertram@reganfirm.com or by phone 202-822-1875 in her office in Washington, D.C.