



Congress Investigating Johnson & Jonson’s “Phantom Recall”

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Here’s a strange story about a mysterious “phantom” recall of Motrin drugs by the Johnson & Johnson company. Allegedly, the company hired a contractor to go to stores and buy all the available stock of defective tablets rather than announce a recall of the product. This came up at a Congressional hearing last week as Democratic House members were investigating the company’s recent problems with a manufacturing plant that produced contaminated medications, some of which contained tiny particles of metal.

A memo titled “Motrin Purchase Project,” obtained by congressional investigators instructs employees: “You should simply ‘act’ like a regular customer while making these purchases. There must be no mention of this being a recall of the product!” Johnson & Johnson did ultimately recall the medicine in July 2009 after the FDA learned of the contractor’s activities. The recall involved more than 40 varieties of children’s medicine, including Tylenol, Benadryl, Motrin and other products that make up nearly 70 percent of the market for pediatric medications.

Kraft & Associates
2777 Stemmons Freeway
Suite 1300
Dallas, Texas 75207
Toll Free: (800) 989-9999
FAX: (214) 637-2118
E-mail: info@kraftlaw.com