

Murtha Gallbladder Removal Complications Underscore Risk of Common Surgery

NY Lawyer Steven J. Schwartzapfel of Schwartzapfel, Truhowsky, Marcus P.C., has Web site dedicated to medical issues that arise from gallbladder operations.

New York, NY ([PRWEB](#)) February 4, 2010 -- Nearly 500,000 people undergo gallbladder removal surgery each year, yet dangerous complications can still arise from this common procedure, as the case of Congressman John Murtha shows, New York attorney [Steven J. Schwartzapfel](#) said.

“While we don’t have enough information to discuss the specifics of Congressman Murtha’s case, the case does underscore how complications can arise from even routine gallbladder surgeries,” said Schwartzapfel, a founder of Schwartzapfel, Truhowsky, Marcus P.C.

Schwartzapfel's New York personal injury law firm handles cases involving complications of gallbladder surgery and has a Web site dedicated to the topic: <http://www.gallbladder-removal.com/>.

U.S. Rep. Murtha of Pennsylvania was in intensive care Tuesday at a Virginia hospital because of serious complications related to laparoscopic gallbladder surgery last week, according to The Washington Post and Politico, an online political news service. Politico said it appeared that Murtha’s intestine may have been cut inadvertently during the gall bladder removal.

Most gallbladder removals today are performed with laparoscopic surgery that involves small incisions and generally a quicker recovery time for patients, Schwartzapfel said. Because the gallbladder is located near other vital organs, he said, it’s critical to avoid cutting or injuring nearby organs during gallbladder removal.

“But laparoscopic gallbladder removal surgery unfortunately is associated with an increased incidence of certain types of injuries,” Schwartzapfel said. “The use of a laparoscopic camera limits the visual perspective so judging distances and the depth of field on a video screen is more difficult than in open surgery.”

Among the complications that can arise are:

- Damage to the liver, the intestines, or other organs;
- Infection or inflammation of the bile ducts, causing digestive problems;
- [Damage to the common bile duct](#), causing bile to enter the bloodstream or abdominal cavity;
- Jaundice;
- Liver failure.

A medical paper published in the Annals of Surgery analyzed major bile duct injuries in 252 patients during laparoscopic gallbladder removal. That report found that the primary cause of error in 97 percent of the cases was misperception by the surgeon. The misperception was so compelling that in three-fourths of the cases the surgeon finished the surgery without recognizing the error, the article said.

“Gallbladder removal is common surgery, but problems still occur all too often,” Schwartzapfel said. “One or more corrective surgeries may be required to repair the damage.”



For additional information about the complications of gallbladder surgery, visit <http://www.gallbladder-removal.com/>.

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