

Scientist in fatal study was paid by drug maker

By **SUE REINERT**
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A government scientist who helped oversee a drug study in which a Plainville nurse died was a paid consultant to the drug maker, a published report says.

Dr. Stephen I. Katz, medical director of the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, received at least \$170,000 from Schering AG since 1996, the Los Angeles Times reported Sunday.

Schering makes Fludara, a leukemia drug that was tested by the institute in the late 1990s for patients with lupus. Jamie Jackson, 42, died in 1999 from complications related to the drug after enrolling in the study.

Jackson lived in Plainville and worked at Caritas Southwood Hospital in Norfolk. She had three children.

The Patriot Ledger reported in 2000 that scientists conducting the Fludara study didn't tell Jackson and other lupus patients that the label on the drug warned of a rare, life-threatening reaction from untreated blood transfusions.

The label recommended that doctors consider giving irradiated blood to Fludara patients who needed transfusions.

Jackson received untreated blood at Southwood Hospital and died from the reaction.

Afterward, study officials told patients and their doctors to get irradiated blood transfusions. But institute scientists did not present a full report of the death in a scientific journal, where it would be more widely read, until this month, the Times said.

Katz was quoted denying that his position with Schering influenced the institute's decisions and said he did not know that Schering made Fludara. He was one of the first institute officials notified of Jackson's death, the Times said.

Mark Stern, a spokesman for the National Institutes of Health, declined to comment yesterday on Jackson's death because of pending litigation, he said. Stern said the agency is preparing a general response to the Times report.

Jackson's family has filed a \$10 million lawsuit against the federal government and Jackson's doctor, Norwood specialist Philip Weinstein, who ordered the blood transfusions. They have denied wrongdoing.

The family's lawyer, Michael Mone, said he had not read the Times story about Katz's involvement with Schering, but "if that's true, it creates serious issues as to the objectivity of these studies."

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