

December 11, 2005

Jurors in Vioxx Trial Are Told to Press On

By REUTERS

HOUSTON, Dec. 10 (Reuters) - Jurors in the first federal lawsuit against [Merck](#) over the painkiller Vioxx adjourned on Saturday and will return on Monday to try to reach a verdict, despite telling the judge earlier in the day that they were deadlocked.

The nine jurors resumed deliberations for about four hours after Judge Eldon E. Fallon of Federal District Court told them they should try to reach a unanimous verdict.

In August, Merck was found liable in state court for the death of a Texas man. The company was exonerated in another case in a New Jersey state court.

The jury began deliberations on Thursday afternoon, in a case brought by the widow of Richard Irvin Jr., 53. The lawsuit claims that Mr. Irvin died of a heart attack in 2001 after taking Vioxx for less than a month.

Merck, based in Whitehouse Station, N.J., faces more than 7,000 lawsuits claiming that for years it hid the risks of heart attack and stroke linked to the drug.