



# Woman sues health store after diet pill rage

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NEW YORK, Jan. 13 (UPI) -- NEW YORK, Jan. 13 (UPI) -- A New York woman is suing a health food store operator for selling her diet pills she alleges sent her into a sleep-deprived rage, her lawyer said.

Sainah Theodore, 26, was a member of the Army Reserves who had dreams of becoming a military officer. Approaching a potential deployment to a combat zone in December 2012 and worried about her weight, Theodore went to Natural Health Food Center in Brooklyn where she purchased the diet pill Natural Lipo-X, which she said she had taken before with successful results, ABC News reported.

The pills prevented her from sleeping for six days and eventually drove her into a rage that landed her in a mental ward for a week, her suit said, where she was ordered held after confronting her mother with a knife, ABC reported.

Theodore, who had no prior history of mental illness, eventually improved and doctors narrowed down the cause of a series of rage-fueled episodes that ended with the family confrontation to the pills, the suit alleged. Doctors tested the remaining pills and found two substances with sketchy histories with the Food and Drug Administration that were not listed on the bottle label, the suit contended.

The substances, sibutramine and phenolphthalein, have both been removed from various diet concoctions and other medications at the FDA's request because of various side effects and because they have not proven widely effective to assist in weight loss, ABC reported.

Theodore's lawyer, Brian Pascale, said he has not been able to identify the company responsible for producing the diet pill, adding the company probably does not operate in the United States.

As for the health store and its owner, Pascale alleges they bear some responsibility.

The store's owner, Adalgsa Garcia, who is named personally in the suit, advertises herself on the store's website as a "doctor" though she does not hold a medical degree, the report said.

"She passes herself off as a doctor, which makes people trust her," said Marc S. Ullman, a lawyer who specializes in food and drug litigation and is helping with Theodore's case.

Contacted by the New York Daily News, a man identifying himself as Garcia's son said Theodore was fasting while taking the medication, which caused the side effects. He said the store's insurance company is handling the lawsuit and declined further comment.

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