

# Thomas Yoo

PRODUCTS LIABILITY LIFE SCIENCES CHAIR

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Thomas Yoo is a litigator and Chair of the firm's national Products Liability Life Sciences Practice Group. Thomas is recognized as one of the "Top 100 Lawyers" in the State of California by the *Daily Journal*. With a focus on product liability matters, consumer class actions, and commercial disputes, Thomas has served as national, regional and trial counsel and in other strategic roles on behalf of leading companies in numerous industries, including life sciences, manufacturing, financial services, real estate, transportation, and private investment ventures. Thomas has been involved in some of the highest profile mass tort litigations in the country, including appointments to defense leadership roles in federal multidistrict litigations (MDL) and statewide coordinated proceedings such as *Vioxx*, *NuvaRing*, and *Zantac*.

Thomas's representations include the defense of clients in litigations involving pharmaceutical, medical device, food, consumer, and industrial products, including *In re Zantac Litigation* (MDL 2924, Southern District of Florida and 11th Circuit Court of Appeals), *In re Baby Food Litigation*, (MDL 3101, Northern District of California), and *In re Port Catheter Litigation* (MDL 3125, Southern District of California), purported class actions involving benzoyl peroxide and potassium chloride drug products and listeria-related recall of food products, and fires and explosions involving catastrophic injuries.

In *Legal 500 USA's* annual national rankings of top law firms, Thomas is described as "an excellent strategist." He is also recognized by *Chambers*, in Product Liability & Mass Torts, USA - Nationwide, with clients stating: "Thomas is an excellent litigator," "very knowledgeable in this field," and "very level-headed, smart and strategic." "He's quick in court, insightful and has good instincts." "Thomas is a very good communicator" and "Thomas has one of the sharpest minds I have worked with." Thomas is recognized by *Who's Who Legal* in Life Sciences and Product Liability Defense: Global Leader. He has also been quoted on legal issues in numerous media outlets, including CNN, CNBC, Reuters, Fox News and *The Los Angeles Times*.

Thomas handles a wide range of complex cases, negotiations and exposures, from prescription pharmaceuticals and medical devices to environmental toxic exposure matters, from mass torts involving thousands of cases to individual contract actions. He has in-depth experience in cross-border business disputes, federal multidistrict litigation (MDL) and statewide coordinations, class action defense, cases alleging violation of

## Capabilities

- Litigation
- Class Action & Multidistrict Litigation
- Products Liability & Toxic & Mass Tort
- Life Sciences
- Food, Drug & Device
- Products Liability Life Sciences

consumer protection statutes such as California's Consumer Legal Remedies Act (CLRA) and Section 17200/17500, and high-profile matters garnering national media attention.

Thomas defends his clients with a comprehensive understanding of the scientific issues implicated in the litigation. Thomas has worked with leading scientists and medical doctors and has handled the cross-examination and Daubert challenges of experts in a variety of fields, including cardiology, neurology, oncology, epidemiology, gynecology, pulmonology, immunology, interventional radiology, pharmacology, toxicology, hematology, metallurgy, mechanical engineering, biomaterials science, food safety, microbiology, vascular biology, rheumatology, and pharmacokinetics.

## Education

- University of California-Los Angeles School of Law (J.D.)
- University of California-Los Angeles (B.A.)

## Bar Admissions

- California

## Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals, First Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Central District of California
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of California

## Recognition

- Named among the Top 100 Lawyers in California by *The Daily Journal*
- Selected by *Los Angeles Business Journal* as one of the Top 100 Lawyers in Los Angeles
- Public Counsel Pro Bono Award from the Immigrants' Rights Project - Pro Bono Asylum Team, 2024
- Ranked in *Chambers USA – America's Leading Lawyers for Business*, Products Liability & Mass Torts, Nationwide, 2022-2025
- Selected as one of the *Los Angeles Business Journal* Leaders of Influence: Litigators & Trial Attorneys, 2024
- Recognized by *Los Angeles Business Journal* for "Top Minority Attorney," 2020
- Named in *Who's Who Legal*:
  - Life Sciences – Product Liability, Product Liability Defense: Global leader, 2019
  - The International Who's Who of Product Liability Defense Lawyers
  - The International Who's Who of Life Sciences, Product Liability
- Recognized by *Diversity & The Bar* as "Leading Product Liability Lawyer"
- Named Southern California *Super Lawyers*, Class Action & Mass Torts Law

# Matters

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## Products Liability and Consumer Class Action Litigation Matters

- Defense liaison counsel for generics pharmaceutical defendants in the *In re Zantac* multidistrict litigation (MDL), MDL 2924, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida and national counsel for pharmaceutical company in personal injury product liability and consumer and third party payer putative class action litigation related to ranitidine (Zantac) drug products and alleged exposure to N-Nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA), over cancer risk claims; won dismissal of all cases on all causes of action on behalf of generics defendants in the MDL, which involves over 150,000 plaintiff claimants; also serving as liaison counsel for generics manufacturers in coordinated state court actions, including Pennsylvania and California, and in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.
- Lead counsel for medical device manufacturer in *In re AngioDynamics Port Catheter Litigation*, MDL 3125, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, involving alleged injuries from port catheter products.
- Lead counsel for defendant in *In re Baby Food Litigation*, MDL 3101, in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, involving alleged autism and ADHD injuries from heavy metals in baby food products.
- Defended pharmaceutical company in consolidated nationwide class action litigation alleging antitrust violations with respect to development and marketing of HIV combination antiretroviral therapy (cART) medications in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California; won dismissal on all causes of action.
- Lead counsel for one of the largest privatized military housing companies in successful defense of purported class actions and individual cases alleging personal injuries and property damage from mold exposure on various U.S. military bases.
- Defended leading German manufacturer of sailplanes in wrongful death product liability action involving fatal crash in Nevada state court; won dismissal on all claims.
- Lead counsel in defense of purported class actions in federal and state courts alleging injury and economic loss from excess benzene content in FDA-regulated hand sanitizers, dissolution variability in potassium chloride medication, marketing of dental aligner products, and monograph warnings on benzoyl peroxide medication.
- Defended Belgian manufacturer of agricultural processing equipment in wrongful death suit in California state court; won dismissal on all causes of action.
- Lead counsel for Merck, Schering-Plough and Organon in defense of litigation involving prescription contraceptive product NuvaRing and allegations of thromboembolic injuries and wrongful death; litigation involved more than 4,000 claims nationwide, federal multidistrict litigation, *In re NuvaRing Litigation*, MDL 1964, in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, statewide coordinations in New Jersey and California, and various state court actions; won dismissal of all cases in the initial bellwether pool, leading to national settlement and resolution of litigation.
- Defense liaison counsel for Merck in California *Vioxx* Judicial Council Coordinated Proceeding involving nearly 4,000 cases alleging heart attack and stroke injuries from use of prescription pain medication.
- National counsel for defendants in talc and asbestos cases involving product and premises liability claim.
- Lead counsel for manufacturer of agrochemical products in product liability litigation

alleging cancer risk from glyphosate (used in Roundup) herbicide products.

- Lead counsel for pharmaceutical client in litigation in multiple jurisdictions involving FDA-approved hormonal implants; won dismissals in California, Louisiana and Maine.
- Defended pharmaceutical manufacturer in brain injury case in Bronx, N.Y., state court, involving 17-year-old plaintiff with pulmonary embolism, cardiac arrest and brain damage, allegedly from use of the client's prescription drug product; in the face of plaintiff's \$27 million settlement demand, won dismissal on all causes of action.
- Defended pharmaceutical client in U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts in product liability case alleging stroke and permanent neurologic deficit, involving a \$21 million plaintiff settlement demand; won dismissal on all causes of action.
- Lead counsel for biotech company concerning safety, remedial assessments and regulatory counsel relating to product manufacturing issues involving FDA-approved cancer treatment.
- Defended insurer client in putative class action alleging wrongful denial of benefits under medical insurance plan; case dismissed on all causes of action.
- Defended supplement leader BSN in national class action alleging consumer fraud claims over several popular creatine and energy sports supplement products.
- Trial counsel for Lincoln Electric, Hobart and other leading manufacturers of welding electrodes in numerous wrongful death, mesothelioma and other personal injury asbestos actions throughout the western United States; did not lose or settle a single case in any jurisdiction in the six years defending these clients.
- Defense counsel for pharmaceutical client in putative class actions brought by third-party payers over efficacy and safety of prescription medication.
- Won dismissal of "wrongful birth" product liability action alleging defect in long-acting contraceptive implant in U.S. District Court for the District of Maine, and successfully defended judgment in the First Circuit Court of Appeals.
- National counsel for commercial kitchen equipment manufacturer in asbestos product liability personal injury and wrongful death actions venued in jurisdictions across the country.
- Defense counsel for welding electrode manufacturers in toxic tort litigation alleging manganese-induced neurologic injuries from exposure to welding fumes; guest speaker before California industrial hygiene association.

## Commercial Litigation Matters

- Represented investment client in breach of contract action involving farming and marketing of commercial table grapes in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, resulting in successful recovery.
- Successfully defended Korean conglomerate, CJ Corp., in action alleging \$30 million for breach of commercial distribution agreement and business torts involving line of cosmetics products.
- Defended the University of Southern California in alleged \$100 million breach of contract and business torts action involving dental implants and clinical trial agreement; won summary adjudication on 11 of 13 causes of action, including Section 17200, and struck plaintiff's \$100 million lost profits claim at trial.
- Lead counsel for a global investment client in breach of contract, fraud and environmental contamination action involving sale of commercial property in New Jersey state court, won dismissal on all causes of action.
- Represented pharmaceutical client in breach of contract claim involving product manufacturing agreement; recovered full value of client's contract damages.
- Defended manufacturer of welding materials in numerous cases alleging economic loss from defective metallurgic properties in materials incorporated into high-rise seismic steel frame buildings throughout Los Angeles.