Retired Wrestler Sues WWE After Contracting Hepatitis C

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Retired pro wrestler William Albert Haynes, a.k.a. Black Jack Haynes, has filed a class-action lawsuit against World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), claiming he contracted the hepatitis C virus (HCV) while in the ring, TMZ reports.

Haynes also alleges that the WWE put its wrestlers in danger by encouraging cocaine and steroid use. He also claims the company fails to warn wrestlers about the long-term health risks of concussions, such as the brain disease CTE, which, the suit alleges, many wrestlers acquired during the fights.

The wrestler, who filed suit in Oregon on behalf of himself and other performers, is demanding more than $5 million from the WWE. Haynes wrestled for the organization from 1986 to 1988.

The WWE has denied the allegations, arguing that since Haynes only spent two years of his 14-year wrestling career employed with the organization, it would be impossible to know if he got hep C because of his work there.

In 2008, the WWE began testing its wrestlers for HCV. The tests are conducted before each performer signs a contract and twice per year after that.

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