Tucker Ellis LLP



James W. Mizgala

Managing Partner

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James Mizgala is the firmwide Managing Partner of Tucker Ellis LLP.

In addition to his leadership role, James is a nationally recognized trial attorney who defends clients in high-stakes pharmaceutical and medical device products liability, consumer fraud, toxic tort, and mass tort litigation.

James has achieved successful verdicts in challenging jurisdictions like Cook County, Illinois, and the District of Nebraska, and has served on trial teams in Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and West Virginia. His leadership as national coordinating counsel in class action litigation highlights his skill in managing complex, multi-jurisdictional disputes.

James's unique background sets him apart: he holds graduate-level training as a neurobiologist and spent over five years in research laboratories before entering the legal field. Given this scientific acumen, he is frequently called upon to lead scientific and expert strategy. His ability to translate complex scientific evidence into compelling legal arguments is a hallmark of his practice.

James offers a rare combination of scientific insight, trial-tested experience, and strategic vision. Recognized in Who's Who Legal in both "Product Liability Defence" and "Life Sciences – Product Liability," he is praised for his deep scientific knowledge and proven record in safeguarding clients' interests in high-stakes tort trials. James is known for his sophisticated, aggressive advocacy and his talent for presenting complex scientific evidence with clarity and impact. Clients value his ability to balance rigorous legal analysis with practical business considerations.

Originally from upstate New York, James now calls Chicago home, where he and his wife have raised three accomplished children. Their family's deep roots in the city reflect James's commitment to community and stability—qualities that also define his approach to client service. As an empty-nester, James brings renewed focus and energy to his practice, always striving to deliver exceptional results for those he represents.

Education

- University of North Carolina School of Law (J.D., with honors, 1994); North Carolina Journal of International Law and Commercial Regulation, Managing Editor
- Johns Hopkins University (M.A.S., 1988)
- Cornell University (B.A. in Biology, with distinction in all subjects, 1984)

State Admissions

- Illinois, 2000
- Pennsylvania, 1994

Federal Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit
- United States District Court, Central District of Illinois
- United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois
- United States District Court, Western District of Pennsylvania
- United States District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Service Areas

- Life Sciences Litigation
- Mass Tort & Product Liability
- Class Action Litigation
- Environmental
- Commercial Asset Recovery & Protection
- Health & Life Sciences
- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Litigation

Experience

REPRESENTATIVE CASES

- As lead counsel for a chemical manufacturer, secured a defense verdict in a Cook County case where plaintiff claimed that her son's birth defects were caused by an occupational exposure to chemicals
- As co-lead counsel for a meat processing company, secured a $17,500 verdict in a case where plaintiff claimed injuries due to hydrogen sulfide exposure and asked the jury for over $1,000,000 in damages

REPRESENTATIVE DECISIONS

- Representing a pharmaceutical company, defeated plaintiff's motion for spoliation sanctions for alleged document destruction
- Obtained dismissal of plaintiff's consumer fraud class action complaint, alleging the presence of formaldehyde in bath products, for failing to plead a cognizable injury-in-fact
- Obtained summary judgment on the adequacy of the defendants' labeling of a statin medication
- Obtained summary judgment in a case of alleged drug-induced liver failure from statin use after exclusion of plaintiff's three causation experts pursuant to *Daubert*
- Obtained exclusion of plaintiffs' generic experts' testimony regarding comparative toxicity of statins as not scientifically valid, of plaintiffs' generic expert's recalculation of manufacturer's study, and of plaintiffs' generic expert's testimony regarding manufacturer's ethical obligations
- On appeal, obtained affirmance of the denial of a motion to certify medical monitoring, consumer fraud, and breach of warranty classes of statin users and of the granting of a motion for summary judgment
- Precluded plaintiffs' expert toxicologist from testifying on medical causation in a case of alleged injury from statin use
- Obtained summary judgment against a medical monitoring class of statin users following the exclusion of plaintiffs' expert pursuant to *Frye*
- Successfully opposed plaintiffs' motion to certify medical monitoring, personal injury, and economic loss classes of statin users
- Successfully argued for exclusion plaintiffs' generic cardiac pathology expert from opining that a diet drug caused cardiac fibrosis during preclinical studies

Publications & Events

MEDIA

- "How I Made Law Firm Leadership: 'Talk Less and Listen More,' Says James Mizgala of Tucker Ellis," Law.com (May 2026)
- "Tucker Ellis's Next Managing Partner Focused on Growth, Maintaining Cleveland Roots," *Crain's Cleveland Business* (October 2025)
- "Incoming Tucker Ellis Managing Partner Discusses Transition," *Law360 Pulse* (September 2025)

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- "What Young Lawyers Need to Know When Looking for an Expert Witness," Teleconference, ABA Products Liability Young Lawyers Subcommittee and Expert Witnesses Committee (April 2017)
- "Experts," Drug & Device Forum 2016, HB Litigation Conferences, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (December 2016)

PUBLICATIONS

- "The Complex Task of Managing Nanotechnology Risks," *IndustryWeek* (November 2015)
- *Mississippi ex rel. Hood v. AU Optronics Corp.*, listed in *Top 20 Food and Drug Cases, 2014 & Cases to Watch, 2015*, The Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI) (2015)
- *Falsberg v. GlaxoSmithKline, PLC*, listed in *Top 20 Food and Drug Cases, 2013 & Cases to Watch, 2014*, The Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI) (2014)
- *Scheuerman v. Nestlé Healthcare Nutrition, Inc.*, listed in *Top 20 Food and Drug Cases, 2012 & Cases to Watch, 2013*, The Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI) (2013)
- "Mitigating Risk in Mass Nano Torts," *Law360* (February 2012)
- *Graco, Inc. v. PMC Global, Inc.*, listed in Top *20 Food and Drug Cases, 2011 & Cases to Watch, 2012*, The Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI) (2012)
- *Carson v. DePuy Spine, Inc.*, listed in *Top 20 Food and Drug Cases, 2010 & Cases to Watch, 2011*, The Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI) (2011)
- "Nanotechnology Manufacturers' Duty to Warn and Potential Affirmative Defenses," *BNA Toxics Law Reporter,* Vol. 26, No. 13 (March 2011)
- "Treating Physician v. Expert Witness," *Law360* (June 2009)

Honors

- Spirit of Hope Award, Thrive Counseling Center (2026)
- The 2026 Lawdragon 100 Managing Partners You Need to Know
- Lexology Index: Healthcare & Life Sciences – Product Liability Defence
  - » Highly Recommended (2026)
- Who's Who Legal
  - » Thought Leaders – USA
    - » Life Sciences – Product Liability
    - » Product Liability Defence
  - » Life Sciences – Product Liability
  - » Product Liability Defence
- LMG Life Sciences
  - » Life Sciences Star (Product Liability) (2018–2025)
- Benchmark Litigation
  - » Local Litigation Star in Product Liability
- The Legal 500
  - » Product Liability and Mass Tort Defense: Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices
- Martindale-Hubbell® AV Preeminent® Peer Rating
- Illinois Super Lawyers® (2018–2022, 2024–2026)

In the Community

- American Bar Association
- Defense Research Institute
- Thrive Counseling Center, Governance Committee Member