



Sherry A. Knutson

Partner

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[Sherry Knutson co-chairs the Tucker Ellis Health & Life Sciences Group.](#)

Sherry is one of the nation's most accomplished courtroom advocates for product manufacturers facing personal injury litigation. Celebrated by clients as "a fantastic trial partner," she has secured favorable verdicts in jurisdictions as diverse as Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri, Ohio, New Jersey, Georgia, and West Virginia, prompting one trial judge to remark that she could "teach a master class in effective cross-examination." Clients routinely commend her "knack for distilling complex scientific and medical issues into concepts that resonate with both sophisticated corporate audiences and lay jurors alike," describing her as "hard-working, a consummate professional, and extremely well prepared," "an amazing trial attorney with great presence," and "creative, thoughtful, and smart."

Over a career spanning almost 30 years, Sherry has handled every facet of product liability litigation, ranging from single-plaintiff actions to nationwide, multi-plaintiff mass-tort proceedings. She has served as national coordinating counsel in several high-profile pharmaceutical litigations and has acted as lead counsel in multiple coordinated proceedings in Chicago, where her strategic vision and meticulous preparation have repeatedly delivered positive outcomes. Her mastery of both the big-picture narrative and the granular scientific detail has earned her a nationwide ranking in Chambers USA for Product Liability & Mass Torts, which lauds her as "strategic, practical, calm, and persuasive." Who's Who Legal recognizes her in both "Life Sciences – Product Liability" and "Product Liability Defence," praising her as "one of the best national strategic thinkers, advocates, and trial attorneys," "superbly qualified and knowledgeable," and "highly recommended as national coordinating and trial counsel" for her ability to craft sophisticated, cost-effective strategies that consistently yield excellent results.

Sherry's commitment to integrity and civility was forged early in her career during her clerkship for the late Hon. N. Patrick Crooks of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which instilled values she has carried throughout her professional journey. Away from the courtroom, she and her husband

divide their time between a condominium in downtown Chicago and a log cabin in rural Indiana, where they enjoy the juxtaposition of city energy and country serenity alongside their twin boys and dog, Tippy.

Education

- Chicago-Kent College of Law, Illinois Institute of Technology (J.D., with high honors, 1996); Chicago-Kent Law Review, Notes and Comments Editor
- Marquette University (B.A., magna cum laude, 1993); Phi Beta Kappa

State Admissions

- Illinois, 2002
- Wisconsin, 1996

Federal Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- United States District Court, District of Colorado
- United States District Court, Central District of Illinois
- United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois
- United States District Court, Southern District of Illinois
- United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan
- United States District Court, Western District of Michigan
- United States District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin
- United States District Court, Western District of Wisconsin

Service Areas

- Health & Life Sciences
- Life Sciences Litigation
- Mass Tort & Product Liability
- Appellate & Legal Issues
- Business Litigation
- Class Action Litigation
- eDiscovery
- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Litigation

Industries Represented

- Athletic Equipment Manufacturers
- Chemical
- Clinical Trials
- Hospitals
- Medical Devices
- Pharmaceutical & Medicine

Experience

- Served as second-chair trial counsel in premature infant formula case, obtaining unanimous defense verdict on claims of strict liability and negligence after plaintiff's counsel requested over \$6.27 billion in compensatory and punitive damages
- Served as co-lead trial counsel for defendants in transvaginal mesh product liability case; obtained a defense verdict on failure to warn after plaintiff's counsel requested over \$8.6 million in compensatory damages during closing
- Served as lead trial counsel for defendant in multi-defendant talcum powder product liability case alleging decedent developed ovarian cancer causing her death; obtained full defense verdict in favor of all defendants after plaintiff's counsel requested over \$84 million in compensatory damages during closing
- Served as co-lead trial counsel in a case involving transvaginal mesh in Chicago, securing a defense verdict on two of three claims; jury awarded only \$55,000 in compensatory damages (past medical expenses) and no punitive damages on remaining claim despite plaintiff's request for \$85 million
- Served as co-lead trial counsel in a case involving a diabetes drug in West Virginia, securing a defense verdict on three of four claims; jury awarded only \$155,000 in compensatory damages and no punitive damages on remaining claim
- Served as co-lead trial counsel in the first bellwether case involving a diabetes drug in Chicago, obtaining a defense verdict in less than two hours following a trial lasting longer than three weeks in which plaintiff requested over \$10 million in damages
- Obtained summary judgment in a product liability case involving ski bindings as to all of plaintiff's claims against client and excluding testimony from plaintiff's only expert witness against client
- Successfully argued appeal to Seventh Circuit (Judge Posner presiding) on behalf of a major pharmaceutical company with regard to removal and fraudulent joinder
- As part of trial team in a case alleging nuisance due to hydrogen sulfide exposure, successfully limited jury award to only \$17,500 despite plaintiff's counsel's request for over \$1.2 million in closing argument; preclusion of plaintiffs' expert toxicologist from testifying on medical causation affirmed
- Obtained defense verdict as part of trial team in a latex glove allergy case

Publications & Events

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- “Is It Too Late to Not Be a Lawyer?” and “We’re Women but Not Superwomen,” Trial Lawyers of Mass Torts (TLMT) Women’s Summit, Los Cabos, Mexico (November 2024)
- “‘Kung Flu’: A History of Violence and Hostility against Asian Americans,” DRI 2023 Drug and Medical Device Seminar, New Orleans, Louisiana (May 2023)
- “Building Resilient Legal Teams Client Panel,” Moderator, Tucker Ellis In-House Counsel Summit Webinar (November 2021)
- “City of Chicago vs. Catherine O’Leary (and Her Cow),” IADC 2021 Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois (August 2021)
- “Cooking and Conversation with Sherry Knutson, Rupert Vaughan, and Xavier Vaughan,” IADC Foundation Social Series (November 2020)
- “‘22 Lewd Chinese Women’: A Diversity and Inclusion CLE Historical Reenactment” and “Jurors in the Age of Trump,” DRI Drug and Medical Device Litigation Seminar, Washington, D.C. (May 2019)
- “Civil Litigation in the ‘Post Truth’ Era: Defending Against Motivated Reasoning,” IADC 2018 Midyear Meeting, La Quinta, California (February 2018)
- International Association of Defense Counsel’s (IADC) 45th Annual Trial Academy, Faculty Member (August 2017)
- “[The Current Legal Landscape for ‘Discovery on Discovery,’](#)” Moderator and materials prepared for “Preparing Corporate Witnesses for Discovery about Discovery and Preservation; Collection and Production Issues,” Environmental & Energy, Mass Torts and Products Liability Litigation Committees’ Joint CLE Seminar, American Bar Association, Squaw Valley, California (January 2017)
- “Working with Experts: Best Practices,” IADC Webinar (January 2017)
- “Be Prepared: Best Practices, Tips and Strategies for Trial Preparation,” Drug & Device Forum 2016, HB Litigation Conferences, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (December 2016)
- “Developing a Game Plan for a Successful MDL Practice,” IADC Annual Meeting, Southampton, Bermuda (July 2016)
- “Trying the Products Liability Case: Tips and Strategies from Pros,” IADC Webinar (January 2016)
- “Trying a Products Liability Case: Best Practices, Tips and Strategies,” Moderator, ABA Women of the Section of Litigation Conference, Chicago, Illinois (November 2015)
- “Lessons Learned from E-Discovery Sanctions in Mass Tort Litigation: Where Do We Go from Here?,” DRI Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. (October 2015)
- “Hot Topics,” DRI Drug and Medical Device Conference, San Francisco, California (May 2015)
- “Trials: A Multi-Chair Perspective,” ABA Section of Litigation, Women in Product Liability Roundtable (July 2014)
- “E-Discovery: Predictive Coding—Friend or Foe?,” DRI Product Liability Conference, Specialized Litigation Workshop: Mass Tort and Class Actions, National Harbor, Maryland (April

2013)

PUBLICATIONS

- [“Illinois SB 328 Signed: Consent-by-Registration Jurisdiction Now Law for Toxic-Exposure Cases,”](#) Tucker Ellis Client Alert (August 2025)
- [“Illinois Poised to Expand General Jurisdiction for Toxic Injury and Illness Lawsuits,”](#) Tucker Ellis Client Alert (June 2025)
- [“Michigan Product Liability Law: Retroactivity of New Law and Primer,”](#) Drug & Device Law Blog (February 2024)
- [“Evaluating Retroactivity of Michigan Drugmaker Immunity Repeal,”](#) *Law360* (January 2024)
- [“But Is It Retroactive? Michigan Repeal of Drugmaker Immunity Statute Set to Go Into Effect February 2024,”](#) Tucker Ellis Client Alert (January 2024)
- [“Jury Trends in the Post-Truth Era and Strategies to Maximize Your Chances of Success,”](#) *IADC Trial Techniques and Tactics* (March 2020)
- [“Juror Jeopardy: What Is Gender Fluidity and How Does It Impact Voir Dire?“,](#) *IADC Trial Techniques and Tactics Committee Newsletter* (October 2019)
- [“Satellite Witnesses Part II: Strategic Considerations Before and During Trial,”](#) *IADC Product Liability Newsletter* (October 2017 – Second Edition)
- [“The Evolution of Diacetyl-Related Litigation: Parts 1 and 2,”](#) *Law360* (August 2016)
- [“Is Your Industry Under Fire? Targeting Entire Industries Through Enterprise Liability,”](#) *Inside Counsel* (June 2015)
- [“Satellite Witnesses: Can Corporate Witnesses be Required to Testify Live from Across the Country? “,](#) *IADC Committee Newsletter* (May 2015)
- *FDA Basics for the Drug and Medical Device Lawyer*, DRI Defense Library Book, Editor (2015)

MEDIA

- [“The Other Side of Victory: Lessons from Trial Losses,”](#) “IADC Speaks” podcast (February 2025)
- [“CVN’s Top 10 Most Impressive Defense Verdicts of 2024,”](#) Courtroom View Network (January 2025)
- [“Top Product Liability Cases of 2024,”](#) *Law360* (December 2024)
- [“Multi-Billion Dollar Law Victory for Women Law Team,”](#) lawfuel.com (November 2024)
- [“Abbott, Mead Cleared in Baby Formula Trial,”](#) *Law360* (October 2024)
- [“J&J, Ethicon Sink Failure-to-Warn Claim in Pelvic Mesh Trial,”](#) *Law360* (July 2022)
- [“CVN’s Top 10 Most Impressive Defense Verdicts of 2021,”](#) Courtroom View Network (December 2021)

Honors

- Chambers USA
 - » Litigation: Product Liability (Illinois) (2025, 2026)
 - » Product Liability & Mass Torts (Nationwide) (2016–2026)
 - » “Up and Coming,” Product Liability & Mass Torts (Nationwide) (2015)
- Legal 500 US Elite (Chicago Commercial Disputes) (2025)
- The Lawdragon 500 Leading Litigators in America (2026)
- International Society of Barristers, Fellow (2016)
- Benchmark Litigation
 - » Top 250 Women in Litigation
 - » Top 250 Women – Midwest
 - » National Practice Area Star (Product Liability)
 - » Litigation Star (Product Liability)
 - » Top 100 Trial Lawyers
- Leaders League, Recommended in Dispute Resolution: Product Liability (2024, 2025)
- Lexology Index: Healthcare & Life Sciences – Product Liability Defence
 - » Thought Leader (2026)
- Who’s Who Legal
 - » Thought Leaders – USA
 - » Life Sciences – Product Liability
 - » Product Liability Defence
 - » Life Sciences – Product Liability
 - » Product Liability Defence
 - » Illinois – Product Liability (2006–2008)
- Law360
 - » Product Liability MVP (2014)
- LMG Life Sciences
 - » Life Sciences Star (Product Liability) (2019–2025)
- Illinois Super Lawyers® (2013–2026)
 - » Top 100 (2022)
 - » Top 50 Women (2022)
- Illinois Super Lawyers Rising Stars® (2011, 2012)
- The Best Lawyers in America® (2023–2026)

In the Community

- International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC)
 - » Annual Meeting Steering Committee (2020)
 - » Trial Tactics & Techniques Committee, Vice Chair – Diversity (2019–2020)
 - » 45th Annual Trial Academy Faculty, Stanford Law School (2017)
- Defense Research Institute
 - » Philanthropic Activities Committee (2017)
 - » Steering and Planning Committees for Drug and Medical Device Substantive Law Committee (2015–2023)
 - » Drug and Medical Device Substantive Law Committee, Chair of Marketing (2017–2023)
 - » Drug and Medical Device Substantive Law Committee, Vice Chair of Marketing (2015–2017)
- American Bar Association
 - » Section of Litigation, Women in Product Liability Subcommittee, Co-Chair (2014–2015)
 - » Section of Litigation, Women in Product Liability Workshop, Co-Chair (2012, 2013)
- Chicago Bar Association
 - » Alliance for Women Executive Committee, Girl Scouts Project Law Track, Co-Chair (2016–2018)