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# Waco Tribune-Herald LOCAL & TEXAS

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## Patient sues physician alleging sexual abuse

By **Tommy Witherspoon**  
Tribune-Herald staff writer

A 20-year patient of Waco physician William P. Coleman alleged that he sexually exploited her after he got her addicted to pain medications.

Nora McCormick, a retired registered nurse from Bosque County, is seeking unspecified damages in her lawsuit against Coleman, filed Thursday in Waco's 74th State District Court.

Coleman was treating McCormick for depression, stress, migraine headaches, back pain with surgery, lupus, fibromyalgia and other ailments, according to the lawsuit, filed on McCormick's behalf by Dallas attorney Lori Watson and Austin

attorney Kevin R. Madison. Coleman did not return phone messages left at his office Thursday.

McCormick confided in Coleman that she had been sexually abused as a child, and Coleman began counseling her about that and other problems while prescribing antidepressants and pain medications, including morphine, the suit alleged.

"Dr. Coleman increased the doses and frequency of these pain medications gradually over the years, until she became addicted and finally overdosed on them on Sept. 7, 2008, simultaneously suffering a stroke," the lawsuit alleged.

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## LAWSUIT

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Coleman began telling his staff during McCormick's office visits in 2007 not to come into the exam room unless he called for them. While he was alone with McCormick, he would touch her in an "inappropriately sexual manner" and told her that he loved her, the suit alleged.

"Dr. Coleman kept repeating to plaintiff over time that he would take care of her and her antidepressants and pain medications forever, but he continuously warned her that she could not tell anyone what they were doing because it would ruin him, he would lose everything and would not be able to continue to prescribe her medications - then," the lawsuit stated.

McCormick, said by Wat-

son to be in her mid-60s, alleged that Coleman became more aggressive with his sexual advances around Christmas 2007, alleging that he raped her in January 2008 in an exam room.

"The sexual abuse by Dr. Coleman continued until approximately Sept. 7, 2008," according to the suit.

### Police involvement

Watson said McCormick has filed a complaint with the Texas State Medical Board but has not filed a report with the Waco Police Department that alleges sexual assault.

"She has not gone to the police department, but we are talking to her about doing just that," Watson said. "She has been in counseling with a psychiatrist and a psychologist, and it has taken her some time to come to grips about what has happened to her. These doctors who are caring for her have helped her find the courage to come forward."

### 2nd lawsuit

Coleman also is a defendant in a wrongful death lawsuit filed in October in Waco's 170th State District Court by the family of Leah Kaye Wallace, who died in June 2009.

Her husband, Tommy Dale Wallace, and her children, Greg Woodard and Melissa Leftwich, allege that Coleman, who was Wallace's doctor since 1982 and diagnosed her with bronchitis, prescribed an antibiotic that he knew or should have known she was allergic to after a simple office medical procedure.

After taking the medication, Wallace had an allergic reaction and complained of a swollen tongue, trouble breathing and chest tightness, the lawsuit alleged. She died two days later of respiratory failure and brain damage, according to the lawsuit.

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