

PRIMODOS SCANDAL



Images provided courtesy of Primodos campaign group

THE SCANDAL

During the 1960s and 1970s, over a million women were prescribed Primodos, a hormone pregnancy test (HPT) consisting of two pills: one with progesterone and the other oestrogen. Primodos contained hormone levels 40 times higher than modern contraceptive pills.

In the 1960s, Dr Isabel Gal found increased birth defects among babies whose mothers had taken Primodos. In 1967, Dr Gal warned the government's Committee on Safety of Drugs (CSD), led by Dr William Inman, of the drug's dangers. Instead of warning doctors, Dr Inman alerted the manufacturer, Schering, of Dr Gal's research, reassuring them that any birth defects were caused by women inappropriately using the drug.

The CSD ignored recommendations that Primodos be withdrawn and did not issue warnings to doctors until 1975. Primodos remained on the UK market until 1978.

The manufacturer of Primodos, Schering (now Bayer), continues to deny any link between the drug and birth defects.

Want to know more?
primodos.org

DID YOU KNOW?

From 2013 onwards, files found in the Berlin National Archives revealed that Dr Inman knew that women who took Primodos faced "a five-to-one risk of giving birth to a child with malformations," yet he advised Schering not to withdraw it to "avoid medico-legal problems."

He later destroyed his own research to prevent its use in legal claims and sought to discredit Dr Gal, describing her as a "rather sad little person."

A 2020 Sky News investigation questioned the integrity of a 2017 government inquiry into Primodos. It revealed that the inquiry report had been altered and that key evidence linking Primodos to malformations had been removed.

WHY WE NEED HILLSBOROUGH LAW

"In 1967 pregnancy testing with HPTs [such as Primodos] should have been stopped [...] An apology is due, and support is required for those who have suffered avoidable harm"

Baroness Cumberlege

"In my view, this is potentially one of the biggest cover-ups of a pharmaceutical outrage that the world has ever seen"

Ed Davey MP

BLOODY SUNDAY



Image provided courtesy of Museum of Free Derry

THE SCANDAL

On 30th January 1972, around 15,000 people joined a peaceful march in Derry to protest against the British policy of imprisoning civilians without charge or trial.

The planned route was blocked by an army barricade. Some marchers diverted to hear speakers at Free Derry Corner in the Bogside, while others continued down William Street towards the barricade. There, the army fired rubber bullets, used tear gas and a water cannon. A riot ensued.

At 4pm, soldiers from 1st Battalion Parachute Regiment entered the Bogside, despite most of the crowd having moved on. Soldiers opened fire on civilians, killing 13 people and injuring 18 others — one of whom later died from his injuries.

In the aftermath, the British government exonerated the soldiers and placed primary blame on the protesters. The initial inquiry, led by Lord Widgery, claimed that British soldiers had been fired upon first and had acted in self-defence. This was later proven to be untrue.

Want to know more?
museumoffreederry.org/bloody-sunday-trust

DID YOU KNOW?

The forensic testing in the first investigation regarding the use of firearms was found to be flawed.

In 1992, appeals from victims' families for a second inquiry were denied by then British Prime Minister, John Major.

In 2010, a second inquiry led by Lord Saville found that none of the victims were armed, and that many were shot dead while fleeing the scene or attempting to assist the wounded. It also found that many soldiers "knowingly put forward false accounts" to justify their actions and that the British Army acted with a widespread loss of discipline.

WHY WE NEED HILLSBOROUGH LAW

"It strikes me that the Army ran amok that day and shot without thinking what they were doing. They were shooting innocent people"

Major Hubert O'Neill, Coroner of the 1973 inquest

"I hold that the witnesses have told lies about the events on several occasions. This includes committing perjury, twice in the case of [soldier] H, to Widgery and Saville and once in the case of [soldier] G to Widgery"

Judge Lynch KC (in the 2025 trial against Soldier F)