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To: Professor Peter Duesberg, Department of Molecular and Cell Biology  
Stanley Hall UC Berkeley  
Date: Fri, 14 Jan 2005 04:58:03 -0500 (EST)

>I just read your June 2003 article--The chemical bases of the various  
>AIDs epidemics. I knew nothing about HIV/AIDS until a few days ago  
>when I (an attorney) was contacted by an individual who was prescribed  
>nevirapine (Viramune) in late 2002 and after taking it for a week  
>developed Steven Johnson Syndrome. He was hospitalized for 3 months,  
>developed renal failure, nearly died and is now blind.  
>I ran across one article that the risk of severe skin reactions to  
>nevirapine had been detected in pre-marketing trials, but the alleged  
>benefits were considered sufficient by the FDA to outweigh this risk,  
>so it was approved in 1996. Having read your article--which makes  
>perfect sense to me--I can't see any possible benefit to this toxic  
>"product." The product literature did, of course, warn that "the most  
>common side effect . . . is a skin rash" and "in a small number of  
>patients, rash has been serious and resulted in death." Describing it  
as a "rash" seems to be a rather innocuous way of describing it.