



Protestor dropped an 800-pound opioid spoon in front of the Johnson & Johnson HQ

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By Ed Murray | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com



Activist artist Domenic Esposito placed an opioid spoon sculpture at Johnson and Johnson headquarters in New Brunswick. Ed Murray | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

An 800-pound opioid cooking spoon delivered to the front door gets your attention.

Activist and artist Dominic Esposito brought the oversized spoon to pharmaceutical giant Johnson and Johnson's New Jersey campus Wednesday as a way to protest prescription drugs' role in the opioid epidemic.

Three people wheeled the 10-foot long, four-foot tall aluminum spoon to the front door, making it impossible for commuters and workers not to see. The J and J logo was etched into the spoon handle.



Security stands next to activist artist Domenic Esposito. Ed Murray | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

“My mom would call me in this panic voice that she found a spoon in the house,” Esposito said. “It was the peak of my brother’s 12-year battle with addiction.”

Johnson and Johnson security arrived and told Esposito he was on private property and he had to leave. They called the police, who asked Esposito to move his protest to the public sidewalk, and he did.

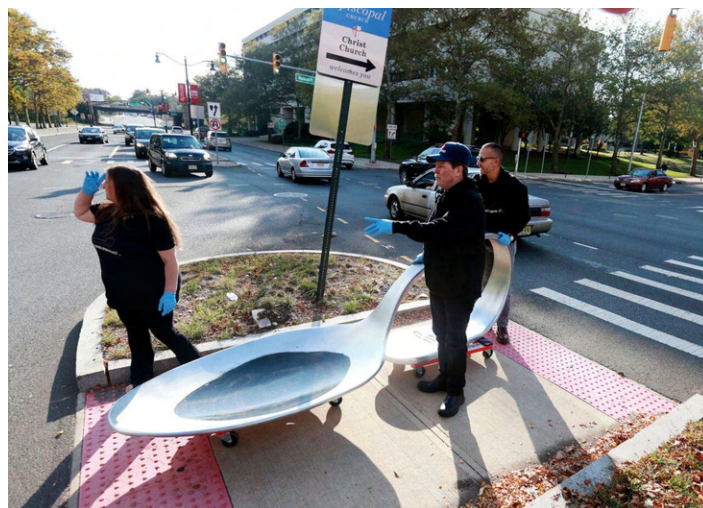
An Oklahoma judge last month, fining the New Brunswick-based company \$572 million, and saying its ads overstated drugs’ ability to treat chronic pain while downplaying their risk of addiction. Johnson and Johnson is appealing the decision.



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"Johnson & Johnson did not cause the opioid crisis in Oklahoma or elsewhere," the company's vice president, Ernie Knewitz, said in a statement about the protest. He noted that drug production is regulated by the FDA and U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency.

"At the same time, we recognize that the opioid crisis is a tremendously complex public health issue and have deep sympathy for everyone affected," the statement said.



Lisa Jensen and Paul Furlong help Activist artist Domenic Esposito . Ed Murray | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

Esposito delivered three additional spoons to other pharmaceutical companies and government offices.

His brother is still struggling with addiction, “but we are always hopeful he will win his battle one day,” he said.



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