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AGGRESSIVE, ETHICAL REPRESENTATION FOR OVER 30 YEARS

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Drowsy Driving Sometimes Flies Under the Radar

There is no shortage of causes for auto accidents, but one culprit that sometimes doesn't receive the spotlight it should is drowsy driving.

According to a National Sleep Foundation (NSF) poll, 60 percent of drivers admitted to having driven while drowsy; 37 percent said they had nodded off while driving. The actual numbers are likely higher. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also reports that roughly 6,000 fatal vehicular accidents each year can be attributed to drowsy driving.

The NSF states that driving after having been awake for 18 straight hours produces effects equivalent to someone with a .05 blood-alcohol concentration. After 24 hours, it equates to a .10 BAC (legal intoxication is .08 in most instances). The results are slower reaction time, lack of awareness of one's surroundings, impaired judgment, and skewed decision making. It's a recipe for disaster.

Frequent yawning, no clear memory of the last few miles driven, and being snapped to attention by the rumble strip are clear signs of drowsy driving. The only antidote to drowsiness is sleep. If you're drowsy, don't get behind the wheel. If drowsiness creeps up on you as you drive, pull over at a safe place and take a 20-minute catnap.



For DUI cases, there are tests that can determine alcohol/drug impairment. Cell phone records can help prove distracted driving. However, there isn't a clear-cut standard of measure to quantify drowsy driving, which makes these cases more complex.

If you or a loved one has been injured by a negligent driver, contact an auto accident attorney, who can help you attain rightful compensation. ●



Spicy Apricot Glazed Chicken

Looking for a spicy *and* sweet dish to match your love for another? Try bringing this chicken to the table!

INGREDIENTS

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (about 4 oz. each)
- 1/3 c. apricot preserves
- 1/4 c. chili sauce
- 1 Tbs. hot mustard
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper

PREPARATION

- Preheat broiler.
- In a small saucepan, combine the preserves, chili sauce, hot mustard, salt, and pepper. Cook and stir over medium heat until heated through.
- Place chicken in a 15x10 baking pan coated with cooking spray. Broil 3-4 inches from heat for 6-8 minutes on each side, or until a food thermometer reads 165 degrees. Brush occasionally with the preserves mixture during the last 5 minutes of cooking. •



Space ... the Final Frontier



For only the second time in human history, a man-made object has left the heliosphere, the protective bubble of particles and magnetic fields created by our sun. NASA announced in December 2018 that Voyager 2, a space probe launched in 1977, had exited the heliosphere and is now over 11 billion miles from Earth.

The mission of the Voyagers 1 and 2 spacecraft was to study Jupiter and Saturn. They had an estimated lifespan of five years. Their mission was then extended to investigate Uranus and Neptune. Over 40 years later, they are both still actively transmitting information back to Earth from interstellar space.

Although technically in interstellar space, they haven't officially exited our solar system, since they are still within range of the sun's gravitational pull.

And they will be for quite some time—roughly 30,000 years. Information from Voyager 2 currently takes over 16 hours to reach Earth, even at the speed of light. For some context, light traveling from the sun takes eight minutes to reach Earth.

Voyager 2 was actually launched 16 days prior to Voyager 1. However, Voyager 2 was programmed to take a more circuitous route through the solar system. Though Voyager 1 was launched later, it would reach Jupiter first, hence the "1" designation.

Each Voyager carries a Golden Record, which consists of a phonograph record and a 12-inch gold-plated copper disk containing select sounds and images to portray the diversity of life and culture on Earth—a cosmic time capsule. If extraterrestrials are out there and stumble upon it, it's a sneak peek at who we are (or were) ... minus the bad stuff. •

Recovering From Traumatic Brain Injury Following an Accident

Every year, millions of people nationwide sustain a traumatic brain injury. Some die from their injuries. Many require prolonged care and hospitalization. The recovery process can take several weeks to many years. And cognitive issues may persist for the rest of a victim's life to varying degrees.



How traumatic injury affects the brain

Traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) are defined as damage or destruction of brain tissue and are categorized as either closed or open head injuries. In a closed head injury, the brain is injured when it strikes the inner wall of the skull at a high velocity. Concussions are a common form of these injuries, but severe impacts can result in more extensive injuries. The rapid movement of the brain can also stretch and injure neuronal axons, which allow the brain to communicate with itself and the body.

In open head injuries, the skull is penetrated in some way, such as being hit by flying debris. These injuries, and later impairment, tend to be limited to a specific area of the brain, but can be just as severe.

Either category of trauma can result in loss of consciousness, coma, and impair breathing and motor functions. In many cases, crash victims experience:

- Disorientation
- Loss of memory
- Dizziness
- Irritability and mood changes
- Nausea
- Headaches

The recovery process

The recovery process varies from person to person, even those with similar injuries. Recovering from moderate to severe brain trauma is a much different process compared to mild cases and are often measured using the Rancho Los Amigos Scale. This scale consists of 8 stages.

In stages 1-3, patients are either in a coma or awake only for short periods of time. By stage 3, the patient can react to commands, though inconsistently.

Progressing through stages 4-6 is a good sign for recovering patients. Their awareness starts to return, but they can be confused and agitated. By stage 6, patients can perform more tasks independently.

Patients at stages 7 and 8 are nearing full recovery. They can learn new skills, though slower than before. They will also have a poor short-term memory, judgment, and problem-solving skills. The final stage marks the point when the patient can function properly and return to their daily life.

Even at the final stage of recovery, there may be a lasting impact on a person's quality of life following a traumatic brain injury. When such serious injuries happen due to someone else's negligence, that person needs to be held responsible for their reckless behavior. Contact our office today to find out how a personal injury attorney at our law firm can help you. •

February 2019 Notable Dates

Feb 1 – National Get Up Day **Feb 4** – National Thank a Mail Carrier Day **Feb 8** – National Kite Flying Day
Feb 14 – National Ferris Wheel Day **Feb 17** – National Random Acts of Kindness Day
Feb 23 – National Dog Biscuit Day **Feb 24** – National Tortilla Chip Day **Feb 28** – National Floral Design Day

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Foodborne Illnesses Can Be Tough to Stomach

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that over 48 million Americans per year suffer the effects of foodborne illnesses, one example being the romaine lettuce E. coli outbreaks over the past year. Thankfully, most people recover within a day or two without need of medical attention, although enduring the symptoms is no picnic.

However, food poisoning can sometimes be severe and even life-threatening. E. coli, salmonella, listeria, and numerous other bacteria and viruses send over 125,000 people to the hospital annually; nearly 3,000 don't survive. Those who do eventually recover may face sky-high medical bills and substantial lost wages. If a restaurant, grocery store, farm, slaughterhouse, or factory is responsible, a claim can be brought against them.

A person filing a claim must establish that a specific food they ate was contaminated—sometimes a tricky venture. Symptoms of foodborne illnesses don't strike immediately. For instance, if you eat contaminated food for breakfast, symptoms might only become evident after you've already had lunch, which muddies the waters considerably. A health authority can confirm if a food is contaminated or not, but they'll need a sample. When others experience the same problem as you, from the same source, it simplifies things.

Next, you must show that the contaminated food is linked to your illness. Having a stool sample tested is the best way to do that. If the sample shows the same harmful microbes as those found in the contaminated food, it significantly bolsters your case.

If you suffer severe consequences from food poisoning, the sooner you contact a personal injury attorney, the better your chances of garnering fair compensation. •

