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AGGRESSIVE, ETHICAL REPRESENTATION FOR OVER 30 YEARS



One of the Best Ways to Screw Up Your Accident Case

At some point in your life you've almost certainly heard the term, "honesty is the best policy." Well, truer words have never been spoken than when it comes to auto accident cases.

Fact is, if you lie or are deceptive to your attorney or to the insurance company about prior injuries, the extent of your current injuries, your medical history, your criminal record, or any other number of issues, at the very least you are going to significantly hurt your accident case...or you may completely ruin any chance you had of collecting damages for your injuries.

Here's the deal: insurance companies have access to tons of information about you – what injuries you've had in the past, any lawsuits you've filed, accidents, etc., and they are good at finding details that bolster their case and hurt yours. Plus, between the Internet and social media, insurance companies now have even more info at their disposal (yes, they can and do check sites like Facebook to see what you are up to!).

So, be up front with your attorney. Tell him or her about your past – warts and all – so that there can be a plan in place right from the start to deal with any problematic information that might exist about you. The last thing your attorney wants is a surprise.

Also, make sure that you are as accurate and truthful as possible when filling out any medical forms (like the ones you would fill out at your doctor's office). We've seen cases ruined because an accident victim forgot to disclose a prior injury or exaggerated their current plight. ●



December 2015 News



Catfishing...It's Not What You Think!

As the Internet, online dating sites, and social media have become part and parcel of our everyday lives, online scams and deceptions are becoming increasingly common. One such scam that has been around for a few years but has gained more attention recently is what's known as catfishing.

Catfishing occurs when a person – the catfish – creates a fake online persona and attempts to develop online relationships. Even though catfishing involves serious deception (catfish often steal photos, work history, education details, etc., and build elaborate back stories), the real impetus for the scam in many cases is simply to interact with someone anonymously because of low self-esteem issues or confidence problems.

Unfortunately, though, catfishing sometimes has a darker side in which scammers set up a fake profile and seek out unsuspecting victims in order to steal money or personal information. In fact, a few years ago, a mother and daughter teamed up to steal over \$1 million from victims by posing on online dating sites as military members serving in Afghanistan.

According to the Better Business Bureau, a possible catfisher:

- Only communicates through email, instant message, and cell phone.
- Is never able to physically meet you in person.
- Is charming, understanding, flattering, sensitive, caring.
- Has a career or life circumstances that takes him or her overseas (i.e. military).
- Is quick to develop the relationship and talk of love.
- Has a young child, typically a boy or girl between the ages of 5 and 12.
- Has a sudden emergency, often involving the child's health.
- Has a reason they cannot get their money and needs your help.



If you've been duped by a catfishing scheme, contact an experienced consumer protection attorney. •

How to Select a Strong Assisted Living Facility

We often hear horror stories in the news about the mistreatment and abuse of assisted living residents. If you're making the decision to transition your parents into a new living situation, you need to know the keys to finding a good assisted living facility:

- **Appearance of the facility:** The facility should look and smell clean. The residents who need help should be assisted promptly and all staff members should be located in places accessible to the residents.
- **Proper nutrition:** Assisted living facilities must serve their residents at least three well-balanced meals per day, as well as additional snacks. The food must be prepared and served in a sanitary fashion and at the proper temperature. Accommodations should be made for residents who are on special diets, such as a no-salt diet. To monitor proper nutrition, the resident's weight should be recorded weekly.
- **Assistance with toileting and bathing:** Residents in need of additional help should be bathed regularly and should always have access to a staff member who can provide bathroom assistance.
- **Accommodations:** Each resident is unique and has different needs that need to be accommodated. For example, if a resident has had a stroke and his left arm is paralyzed, then he will need to be accommodated so that everything is within reach of his right arm.
- **Staffing:** Understaffing can be a huge problem in assisted living facilities. Without proper staffing, the residents' needs cannot all be met adequately and there is an increased chance for abuse. A facility with plenty of trained staff and nurses available is able to provide the best care.
- **It's all about the resident:** An easy way to tell if a resident is receiving proper care is to simply look at them. Look for signs of good health, such as clean skin, a healthy weight, and a smile on their face. If they have complaints, or you don't think that they are being taken good care of, then speak up for them. •

A Simple But Tasty Recipe – Chocolate Holiday Pretzels

SERVINGS: 30 **YIELD:** 3 plates

INGREDIENTS:

3 (10 ounce) bags of checkerboard or windowpane shaped pretzels
1 (17 5/8 ounce) bag of holiday M&M's plain chocolate candy (red & green)
3 (13 ounce) bags of Hershey's Hugs Chocolates
3 (13 ounce) bags of Hershey's Chocolate Kisses

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 170 degrees.

Open the bags of pretzels and remove all the unbroken pretzels.

Place them on waxed paper-lined cookie sheets in a single layer.

Unwrap Hugs, place one on each pretzel, repeat for an entire cookie sheet.

DO ONLY ONE TYPE OF CANDY PER SHEET, as the Hugs melt much quicker than the Kisses.

Repeat using the Hershey's Kisses.

Place cookie sheet/s in the preheated oven, bake for 4 minutes for the sheet of pretzels and Hugs, 5-6 minutes for the pretzels and Kisses.

Immediately upon removing from the oven, place one M&M on top of each pretzel/chocolate.

Place cookie sheet in freezer for 8-10 minutes, to allow chocolate to re-set. ●



December 2015 Important Dates

December 6
Hanukkah (Start)

December 10
Human Rights Day

December 22
First Day of Winter

December 25
Christmas Day

December 26
Kwanzaa (Start)

Source: Food.com and Family Fun magazine

Elephants and Cancer... the Strange Paradox

Given the immense size of elephants, the amount of cells they have (about 100 times more than humans), and their relatively long life span of around 70 years, it stands to reason that elephants should get cancer and die from it more often than we as humans do.

But that's not what happens.

Instead, elephants die from cancer at a rate of just around five percent. In contrast, humans suffer cancer-related deaths at a rate of 11 to 25 percent.

So, why the big difference? Scientists believe they may have figured that one out.

In a recent paper published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, researchers showed that elephants have 20 copies of a gene called TP53, which is known for its ability to create a protein that suppresses tumors. Humans have just one copy of TP53.

Scientists conducted experiments (by exposing white blood cells collected from elephants and humans to radiation that damaged the cells' DNA) to see what role the extra tumor-fighting genes might play in keeping cancer at bay in elephants. Scientists figured that the elephant cells would likely just repair themselves faster because of the extra TP53 genes, but they were in for a surprise.

Turns out that the elephants' damaged cells actually died at a much faster rate than the human cells. Essentially, the extra TP53 caused the elephant white blood cells to kill themselves rather than pass on potentially dangerous mutations.

Next step for scientists will be figuring out how to use their newfound knowledge to help humans fight cancer. ●



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Unbelievably, 2015 is already drawing to a close (it seems like every year goes by a little faster!). Everyone at our firm would like to take a moment to wish you and yours the very best this holiday season. We hope it's filled with fun, laughter, good cheer and good company. And, it's our sincere wish that the new year brings you excellent health and many blessings as well.