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## Traumatic Brain Injuries Can Change Lives Forever

Traumatic brain injuries (TBI), whether “mild” or severe, can have far-reaching and long-lasting ramifications for victims.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), falls and vehicular accidents account for most TBI hospitalizations. Injuries can be *physical*, ranging from headaches, dizziness, and fatigue, to vision impairment, chronic pain, and paralysis; *cognitive*, including memory issues, inability to concentrate, disorientation, and impaired decision-making and judgment; and *emotional*, which may manifest as depression, irritability, and significant personality and behavioral changes.

Per the CDC, severe TBIs also render a victim more vulnerable to epileptic seizures, future Alzheimer’s disease or other brain disorders, and a shortened life span.

Some brain injuries are immediately obvious. The victim is in a coma, their skull is fractured, or swelling or bleeding on the brain shows up on imaging tests. But many TBIs occur at a near-microscopic level, frequently evading initial detection. In addition, symptoms sometimes take days or weeks to appear.

Additionally, not every TBI requires a blow to the head. For instance, whiplash can cause the brain to bounce off the inside of the skull, but no external blow was delivered. To dispel another myth, a person does not have to lose consciousness to suffer a TBI.

Many people fully recover from “mild” TBIs. However, various studies indicate that 10 to 20 percent will have lasting effects after one year — some for the rest of their lives.

Claims adjusters and insurance defense attorneys frequently attempt to minimize the extent of brain injuries. If you are a victim of negligence, seek prompt medical attention and contact a personal injury attorney to safeguard your interests. •



# Summer Chicken Salad

A tasty, refreshing grilled complement to any cookout!

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Olive oil
- 4 ears fresh corn
- 3 Tbsp. minced fresh dill (plus more for serving)
- 3 celery stalks, finely diced
- 1 medium red onion, finely diced
- 1.5 c. blueberries
- ¾ c. crumbled feta
- ¼ c. half-and-half
- ¼ c. mayonnaise
- ¼ c. sour cream
- 1 tsp. sugar
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 head butter lettuce, leaves separated

## PREPARATION

- Place chicken breasts into a large plastic storage bag and pound with a mallet or rolling pin to a ¼-inch uniform thickness. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
- Heat grill and drizzle with olive oil. Grill the chicken on both sides until done (~7 minutes per side). Set aside to cool.
- Grill corn for a few minutes, until still crunchy but colorful. Shave the kernels off each cob with a sharp knife. Combine with dill, celery, and onions in a large bowl. Set aside.
- For dressing, mix together feta, half-and-half, mayonnaise, and sour cream in a bowl. Stir in sugar, lemon juice, and some salt and pepper, to taste.
- Slice the chicken to create flat, randomly shaped pieces. Throw into bowl with the celery, onions, and corn. Stir to combine. Pour half of dressing over ingredients and gently toss until lightly coated. Add blueberries.
- Spoon salad into butter lettuce cups and sprinkle with extra feta and dill. •



## July 2020 Notable Dates

**July 1** – National Postal Worker Day    **July 5** – National Workaholics Day    **July 9** – Cow Appreciation Day  
**July 12** – National Different Colored Eyes Day    **July 18** – National Caviar Day    **July 20** – National Moon Day  
**July 25** – National Merry-Go-Round Day    **July 31** – National Avocado Day



## Our Enduring National Symbol

The powerful and majestic bald eagle — our country's national bird since 1782 — was not admired by Ben Franklin, who spoke disparagingly of the creature in a 1784 letter to his daughter. He deemed the bald eagle a “bird of bad moral character [who] does not get his living honestly.” Bald eagles sometimes cop a free meal by stealing fish from other birds. Evidently this rankled Franklin, who believed the “respectable” turkey to be a superior national symbol. Had a bald eagle once stolen Franklin's lunch?

Bald eagles flourished on this continent prior to European settlement, but settlement gradually brought about habitat destruction. Bald eagles, also viewed as competition for game and a threat to livestock, were killed. By 1940, protected status was required.

Shortly after World War II, the pesticide DDT further reduced their numbers, thinning their eggshells, many of which would break. But with the banning of DDT in 1972 and the rise of conservationist breeding programs, they have mounted a spectacular comeback.

Bald eagles typically mate for life, share in parenting duties, and return to the same nest each year, after a little touch-up work. Their nests are enormous — on average, four to five feet wide and two to four feet deep. They are composed of interwoven sticks and lined with grass, cornstalks, moss, and feathers.

One bald eagle downer is its “voice,” which is comparable to a cackling laugh ill-suited to its image. When movie/television directors film a nature scene involving a bald eagle, they frequently dub in the more impressive scream of a red-tailed hawk. However, it is believed bald eagles do all their own stunts. •



# Backyard Fireworks Can Spark Trouble

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, in 2018 nearly 10,000 Americans headed to hospital emergency departments due to fireworks-related injuries — most of them of the backyard variety. Nineteen percent of patients needed to be admitted.

The monthlong period surrounding the Fourth of July (i.e., the first month of summer) ushers in a spike in fireworks-related injuries. Nearly two-thirds of annual injury totals occur during this stretch. Burn injuries dominate, but serious eye injuries, among others, factor in as well. On the Fourth of July, fireworks-related fires outnumber all other sources combined, leaving their mark in property damage.

Those who set off backyard fireworks need to, first and foremost, make sure they are legal per state and/or local ordinances. Repercussions await those who flout these laws. If a guest or neighbor is injured by illegal fireworks, the user will be presumed negligent (“negligence per se”) and may have criminal prosecution to deal with, too.

Some fireworks may be designed/manufactured in shoddy fashion, tampered with after manufacture, offer unclear instructions, or lack proper warning labels. These situations may warrant product liability claims. Always purchase fireworks from licensed dealers. Unlicensed dealers may be pawning off products that haven’t undergone proper scrutiny, increasing their unreliability.

A fireworks user who shoots projectile fireworks toward nearby buildings (or other people), doesn’t follow product instructions, or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs obviously raises their risk of liability if injury or property damage results.

Fireworks can be sights (and sounds) to behold ... and hazardous, too. If you are injured by fireworks due to negligence, contact a personal injury attorney to protect your rights. ●



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## Asbestos ... Still a Threat After All These Years

Until the 1970s, asbestos — a naturally occurring mineral fiber — had been widely utilized in a multitude of insulation, construction, manufacturing, and automotive materials, among others. It is noted for its high resistance to heat, chemical, and electrical damage.

However, the tide turned in the 1970s due to asbestos's proven link to deadly diseases. Over time, people exposed to asbestos are at a substantially increased risk for mesothelioma, lung cancer, asbestosis, and other devastating illnesses.

From 1940 to 1970, roughly 27.5 million American workers were exposed to asbestos. Tragically, companies were aware of the damage asbestos could cause but withheld that information from their unsuspecting employees. Employees sometimes jeopardized family members' health by bringing the fibers home on their clothing.

Why are asbestos lawsuits still in the news when the veil was lifted on asbestos hazards nearly half a century ago? Reasons include the following:

- The latency period for asbestos-related diseases can range from 10 to 50 years. Someone exposed to asbestos in 1975 might not experience the effects until 2025.
- Many older buildings (built prior to 1980) and water pipes still contain asbestos. Building owners are required to notify contractors who are performing maintenance, renovation, or demolition work. Many neglect to do that; some don't realize asbestos is present.
- Products containing asbestos are not entirely banned in the United States — think unholy alliance of politics and money. Roofing products, cement pipes, and brake pads are a few examples.

If you suspect asbestos exposure is responsible for health problems you or a family member is experiencing, contact a product liability attorney to protect your rights. ●