



The Road To Justice Starts Here

REPRESENTING MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT VICTIMS

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While a broken leg can be a serious injury no matter how it occurs, leg fractures caused by car accidents often can be devastating and severe.

Because of the sheer force a car accident applies on the body, bones may not only fracture, but may even shatter. Worse yet, leg fractures from car accidents can sometimes break the skin, which opens up the possibility of infection.

Normally, a simple leg fracture requires nothing more than a cast to keep the area immobile while the bone heals. Unfortunately, the process for healing a leg that's been broken in a car accident is often much more complicated.

Because of the variety of complications that come with these types of breaks – multiple fractures, open fractures, damaged tissue, nerve damage – the healing process is usually long and stressful. It's even worse if the fracture occurred near a joint, such as the ankle, knee or hip.



While a cast would be needed for a simple fracture, a complex fracture often requires screws and pins to hold the bones in place. That's if the bone is even salvageable. In some cases, the damage is so extensive that the bone has to be replaced with an artificial limb. The fact that we need our legs to move around throws an additional complication into the healing process. In many cases, the injured person is forced to keep weight off of the leg for several months to a year.

A complex leg fracture from a car accident can cause stress long after the bones heal, as well. In addition to months of what can be grueling physical therapy, people who have suffered these types of leg fractures are often plagued by chronic pain in the injured leg for years.

If you've suffered a broken leg or other serious injury in an accident, you should contact an experienced motor vehicle accident attorney to discuss your legal options. ■

don't be fooled

INSURANCE ADJUSTERS AREN'T YOUR FRIENDS

It's something we see all the time — a person who has suffered injuries in a car accident receives a phone call from the other driver's insurance company at some point after the accident.

The insurance company representative seems very nice and very helpful. They seem like they just want to ask a couple of questions, maybe talk a little bit about what happened during the accident. In fact, they seem genuinely concerned.

Don't be fooled.

An insurance adjuster who calls you after an accident has only one thing in mind: To help the insurance company maximize its profits by paying out as little as possible on your claim, or, in the best case scenario for them, deny your claim completely or just make it go away.

Insurance adjusters are well trained and most are very good at what they do. They'll use all sorts of tricks to see if they can get you to admit some level of responsibility for the accident; they'll discourage you from retaining a lawyer; they may offer a low-ball settlement and declare that it's the absolute best offer you will get; they'll tell you that the courts are all backed up and that it will take years for you to get any money if you don't accept their offer. The list goes on and on.

So, what's your best recourse if you or a loved one receives a call from an insurance adjuster who "just wants to talk" or wants you to give them a recorded statement? Politely decline the offer and make an appointment for a free consultation with an experienced motor vehicle accident attorney to make sure that your rights are protected. ■

BRIAN LEE LAW FIRM, PLLC IS PLEASED TO WELCOME NEW ASSOCIATE

Tianta C. Youngblood



BRIAN LEE LAW FIRM, PLLC is pleased to announce that Tianta Youngblood has joined our firm as an associate attorney.

Tianta is a lifelong resident of Saratoga Springs.

Tianta was called to the bar in June 2011, after graduating from Thomas M. Cooley Law School, Lansing MI in 2010. Prior to attending law school, Tianta graduated from the University of Delaware with a BA in History in 2002. She graduated from Saratoga Springs High School in 1998.

In her spare time, Tianta is an active member in her community of Saratoga Springs. She enjoys baking, theater performances at Proctors and reading.

Tianta is a member of the NYS Bar Association, Saratoga County Bar Association and the Capital District Black and Hispanic Bar Association.

Tianta has a keen interest in personal injury law and she looks forward to helping the firm's clients.

WELCOME TO BRIAN LEE LAW FIRM TIANTA! ■

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MALTA leads

FOR MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS IN SARATOGA COUNTY

In a recent Saratogian (November 20, 2011) article about The Malta Ridge Volunteer Fire Company's new Jaws of Life, some interesting statistics on accidents were included. The article reported that the Malta volunteer firefighters are one of the busiest extrication teams in Saratoga County. The Town of Malta is seeing a wave of development – including GlobalFoundries, Ellsworth Commons and Blacksmith Square – that has already increased traffic and crash volumes.

The Town of Malta had more fatal or serious injury traffic accidents per mile of road last year than any other in Saratoga County. Malta saw an average of 1.1 serious accidents per road mile in 2010, meaning it had the highest average in the county for the third consecutive year.

According to the NYS State Department of Motor Vehicles, more than half of the 11 fatal accidents state police investigated in Saratoga County last year occurred in Malta. The fatality rate is 30 percent above the state average.

Chief Peter Shaw stated: "Our volunteer firefighters respond to about 300 calls per year, including about 70 motor vehicle crashes." ■

what does your car say about you? MORE THAN YOU MIGHT THINK.

Did you know that most vehicles these days are equipped with event data recorders (EDRs), which are small devices that record important bits of data about a car at any given moment, such as its speed, whether the brakes are applied, or whether your seat belt is buckled?

The EDRs, which are currently installed in approximately 90 percent of cars, only record data for a few seconds at a time, but in the event of a crash, the device logs exactly what your car was doing in the crucial moments prior to the collision.

While some argue that EDRs enable safety researchers to get inside a crash and potentially improve aspects of the vehicle, like passenger restraint systems, others are concerned about what happens if the data from EDRs fall into the hands of others, like representatives from your insurance company.

That's exactly what many drivers are growing more wary of, since EDRs gather information that insurance

claims adjusters are looking for following an accident. In addition to the vehicle's speed, direction and brakes, the EDRs record the number of crash events that occurred and how far the acceleration pedal was compressed.

Officially, insurance companies can only access this data with the driver's consent or if required to do so by law, like in cases concerning vehicular manslaughter. In many states, though, insurance companies may have attained that consent from you when you accepted their policy and agreed to cooperate in insurance claims investigations.

As you would expect, the use of EDR data has become somewhat of a controversy, with many claiming if you drive lawfully, it shouldn't matter what the devices record or who has access to the data. There is plenty of oppositions, however, from those claiming such access is a breach of their rights by insurance companies and/or the government. ■

ask the doctor

Dear Dr. Chao:

Q: I was in a car accident 3 weeks ago. My forehead flew into the windshield and I now have a huge scar on the top of my forehead down to the middle of my eyebrow and across my face. Half of my eyebrow is also missing. What can I do?

A: Sorry to hear about your accident and the injuries you sustained. First of all, did a board certified plastic surgeon close your wounds? It is unfortunate, but every day we see patients with horrendous scars who tell us that they did not know that they had the option to have a plastic surgeon treat them at the time of the injury in the emergency department. I'm not saying that the care you had was not good, but plastic surgeons have special techniques that they use to help minimize scarring and improve the appearance of scars. Patients have the right to get the best care and sometimes asking for a plastic surgeon is the right option. That being said, it would be best if we could get a look at your scars to see if there is something

that we can do in the short-term. If not, we often recommend waiting a period of time to allow the scars to mature before revising them, unless they are terribly disfiguring.

In terms of your eyebrow, we can probably treat this with follicular unit hair transplantation. Unlike traditional hair transplantation where a large strip of hair is removed from the back of your head leaving you with an obvious scar, our technique removes individual follicular units, leaving you with essentially no scars! We have been using this technique very successfully in both men and women from eyebrow restoration to treating bald spots and receding hairlines.

Dr. Jerome Chao has offices in Saratoga Springs and Latham, NY. He and his staff can be reached at 518-203-2582 or toll-free at 1-866-DrChao1. Please visit our websites at www.drchao.com and www.upstatehair.com. ■



Important Dates – January 2012

Jan 1 – New Year's Day

Jan 16 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Jan 17 – Ben Franklin's Birthday

Jan 23 – Chinese New Year

Jan 28 – Christa McAuliffe Day

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tips for using gift cards



If you happened to receive one of the most popular holiday gifts this season – a gift card – here are some tips to help you get the most out of your gift:

- ✓ Try to use it as soon as possible. It's far too easy to misplace a gift card or lose sight of it if it gets buried in your wallet or purse.
- ✓ Review the terms and conditions of your gift card to see if there are any fees associated with it.
- ✓ Remember that if you receive a gift card that is issued by one of the major credit card companies, you can use the card at any retailer that accepts their credit and debit cards.
- ✓ Don't blow your budget just because you are using a gift card. Many people end up spending far more than the value of the gift card when they use it.
- ✓ Be sure to write down the gift card number if it is from one of the major credit card companies since you may be able to get a replacement for a small fee if it is lost or stolen. Store gift cards usually can't be replaced since they are treated as cash.
- ✓ Hang on to your gift card even after you've used it just in case the retailer requires it for any returns you may have to make.
- ✓ If you have any problems with your gift card, you should contact the store or credit card company that issued it. If you still run into problems or can't get your issue resolved, contact the Federal Trade Commission at 877-FTC-HELP or our state attorney general. ■

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