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Bus Accidents

One form of mass transportation that many people have in common is buses—from children going to school and commuters going to work, to group excursions, buses are an ideal way to transport many people to a common destination.

Buses are typically a safe way to travel, but the size and lack of seatbelts and airbags can be problematic when accidents occur. Buses are involved in fewer accidents than other ground-transportation vehicles, but the chance of sustaining a serious injury tends to be greater when in a bus accident. Because of the height, they are more likely to tip and roll than other vehicles, causing injury to unrestrained passengers.

Some common factors in bus accidents include driver fatigue, driver intoxication, poor driver training, improper vehicle maintenance, and overloaded or improperly loaded buses.

Who pays compensation to injured passengers in the case of a bus accident? That depends on who is at fault. If it is the driver



of another vehicle, victims can make a third-party claim for their injuries with the at-fault driver. If the bus driver is at fault, commercial companies should have an insurance policy that covers injured passengers. Policies vary, and passengers could be covered individually or there might be a pool of money to split among injured passengers.

If the bus is owned or operated by the government (city and school buses), laws vary by state and locality. If you've been injured, your attorney will file a notice of claim. The time period to file such a notice and provide supporting documentation is usually much shorter than typical statutes of limitations.

Burn Injuries

Burns can cause serious and lifelong physical and emotional injury and death. You might associate burns with minor kitchen accidents (who hasn't burned their fingers while cooking?) or tragic house fires, but burn injuries can also be the result of poorly designed or faulty products, careless service or maintenance, or unsafe working conditions.

According to a 2016 fact sheet on burn injuries released by the American Burn Association, approximately 486,000 people sought medical treatment for burn injuries, 40,000 of whom required hospitalization. The most common reasons for burns included fire, scalding, and chemical burns, with most accidents occurring at home (73 percent) or at work (8 percent).

Other types of burns include electrical burns, which destroy tissue below the skin and can travel through the body, causing traumatic injury, and radiation burns, which typically happen in the workplace or a medical setting. Common causes of burn injuries include home and building fires, hot liquid and steam, defective products, and vehicle accidents.

If you or a loved one was injured from a burn accident, call our office for a confidential consultation.

Lawyers helping injured people.

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Uber Revises Private Arbitration Policy in Cases of Sexual Misconduct

Did you know that, until recently, when you agreed to use Uber, you also agreed to settle any matters that might have arisen between yourself and the driver in confidential arbitration?

In spring 2018, 14 women requested by letter that Uber's board of directors release them from private arbitration so they could pursue a class-action lawsuit against the company. The women, who claimed to have been sexually violated by their Uber drivers, said that Uber's driver screening is inadequate, leading to sexual assault, harassment, and rape. Furthermore, the letter stated that by keeping the illegal conduct of its drivers secret from the public, Uber was creating a false sense of security and denying women a trial before a jury of their peers.

The letter stated: "Forcing female riders, as a condition of using Uber's app, to pursue claims of sexual assault and rape in secret arbitration proceedings does not 'make streets safer' [Uber's mission statement]. In fact, it does the opposite. Silencing our stories deprives customers and potential investors of the knowledge that our horrific experiences are part of a widespread problem at Uber."

The company responded favorably and announced that it will now allow Uber riders and drivers to file allegations of rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment in court. It also retracted a policy requiring sexual-misconduct settlements to be kept confidential. Competing ride-share company Lyft has made similar policy changes.

Dog Bite at Work

For some workers, dog bites can be an occupational hazard. Jobs that require workers to go on private properties and into homes—such as home health aides, nannies, cleaning and service providers, mail carriers, and lawn and garden workers—are at risk of being bitten by dogs that aren't supervised or restrained while they work.

Fortunately, canines and humans work well in the same space in most instances, and homeowners usually take care to keep their pets comfortable and workers safe, but how would you recover for losses if you were injured by a dog while working? Would you use workers' compensation, or would you have to go through a homeowner's insurance?

Dog-bite injury claims differ from state to state. Typically, if you are injured while you are working, you would file a workers' compensation claim, which would cover medical expenses and would also pay a portion of lost wages. More than that, in some states, you could also sue the homeowner, if they are not also your employer, to recover additional losses.

If you are bitten by a dog, be sure to report your injury to your employer immediately and seek medical attention. Consult an attorney to discuss the best way to recover damages.

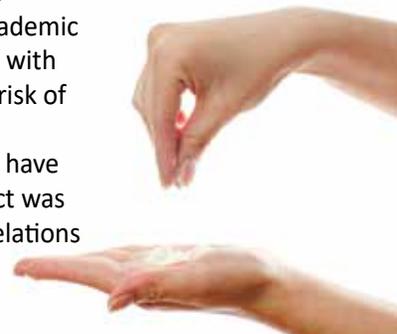


Asbestos Found in Talcum Powder

Johnson & Johnson, which is still dealing with fallout from lawsuits alleging its talcum powder caused ovarian cancer, is finding itself in trouble again over the product. Documents made public in December 2018 reveal that company executives and mine managers have been aware that both raw talc and manufactured powders have tested positive for small amounts of asbestos.

The documents, reported on by the Reuters news agency, showed that in the early 2000s, executives discussed the problem but did not disclose it either to regulators or to the public. Johnson & Johnson denied the reports and says that the company routinely works with regulators to test the quality of its products and points out that numerous independent studies have shown that talc doesn't contain asbestos. Since the late 1950s, studies by academic institutions and independent labs linked talc with asbestos, and talc mining with an increased risk of respiratory cancer.

Furthermore, the company was shown to have worried about a talc ban, whether its product was safe, and how it might weather bad public relations regarding its powder, one of Johnson & Johnson's flagship products.





What To Do After a Motorcycle Accident

Motorcycle accidents can be catastrophic, but not all are. Even if you don't feel too bad after an accident, you should visit a doctor. As you know, motorcycles are made for the riding experience, not designed for rider safety, and any accident, no matter how small, has the potential to cause injuries. In particular, soft-tissue and some head injuries may not be immediately symptomatic. If you were thrown or dumped off a bike, chances are you braced for impact with your hand and arm, risking nerve damage. Even seemingly minor road rash can become infected if not treated right away.

Here is the problem, if you wait to go to the doctor, you risk overlooking a condition that could be serious without treatment. An insurer could argue that you are partially at fault for the severity of your injury if you did not seek medical attention. At a post-accident checkup, a doctor might advise to avoid strenuous activity or suggest treating a nasty brush burn with topical antibiotics. If you don't have an exam and treatment plan, your condition could worsen.

If you or a loved one was injured in a motorcycle accident, call our office for a confidential consultation.

Protect yourself from common motorcycle injuries

ROAD RASH

➤ Wear a leather (or Kevlar) jacket, leather pants or chaps, a full-face helmet, and gloves.

BROKEN BONES

➤ Invest in armor and riding clothes that have special inserts in areas like the pelvis and joints, and wear reinforced gloves and good boots.

SPINAL INJURY

➤ Wear an armored collar and back armor to help stabilize your neck and back.

BRAIN INJURY

➤ Wear a helmet that meets DOT and Snell standards.

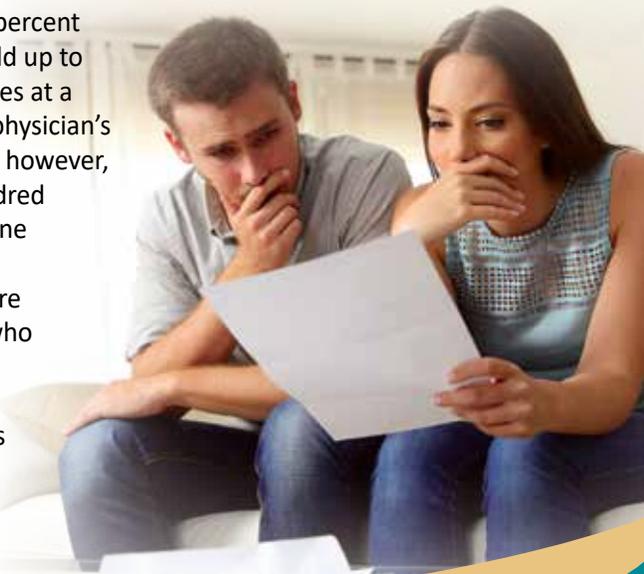
OVERCHARGED

Imagine sitting in the waiting room of an emergency room. As you wait, you begin to feel better and decide to leave ... but you're still charged \$1,000 for services. Believe it or not, this is a true story. Judy Barton, of Michigan, was charged this fee for sitting in a waiting room and having a member of the hospital staff enter her into the system and put a plastic bracelet on her wrist. After significant media attention, the hospital agreed to reduce the bill since Barton left before receiving any specialized attention for assessment or treatment.

This isn't an isolated incident. According to the Center for Public Integrity, 90 percent of hospital bills contain errors or use questionable overcharging practices that add up to big bucks. You may be surprised to see a facility fee on a bill for outpatient services at a hospital-affiliated clinic or urgent care that are double or even triple that of the physician's fee. The facility will often waive this fee for those with accepted insurance plans; however, those who are out of network are often surprised to receive a bill of several hundred dollars for using the facility in addition to a bill for what they thought was a routine doctor's appointment.

A hospital's list of prices, also known as a chargemaster, contains prices that are inflated and are only charged to out-of-network and uninsured patients. Those who are out-of-network or are uninsured are charged exorbitant costs for the exact same services and care as those who are in-network. According to hospitals, this is to offset the costs of treating those who are uninsured. This practice, known as balanced billing, creates a financial hardship for patients who pay the difference.

In January of 2019, hospitals were required to list their prices online, but the prices still vary depending on health-insurance coverages.



'POOL SAFELY'

There's nothing like being the family who has a pool ... memories are made as friends and family gather to enjoy fun in the sun. Play it safe this summer; don't let a good time become tragic.

Drowning remains the leading cause of unintentional death for children ages 1 to 4 years old. An average of more than 350 children under the age of 15 die each year in drowning incidents. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to follow these simple steps from Pool Safely, a national public education campaign, to create a safe environment around swimming pools and spas:

- ➔ Install a four-sided fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate around all pools and spas.
- ➔ Designate an adult *water watcher* to supervise children at all times around the water.

- ➔ Learn how to swim, and teach children how to swim.
- ➔ Learn how to perform CPR on children and adults.
- ➔ Teach children to stay away from pool drains, pipes, and other openings to avoid entrapments.
- ➔ Ensure every pool or spa has drain covers that comply with federal safety standards.

Pool Safely works with partners around the country to reduce child drownings, nonfatal drownings and entrapment incidents in swimming pools and spas. To learn more about Pool Safely, visit poolsafely.gov.

Source: CPSC Newsroom



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Black Lung Disease on the Rise Again

Coal miners in the United States are subject to black lung disease, a job-related condition caused by long-term exposure to coal dust. As miners breathe the dust, it settles into the lungs, where it is attacked by the immune system. Over time, this results in inflammation and scarring. It can take years for the disease to progress, it is irreversible, and can be deadly. Luckily, since regulatory measures to control dust in coal mines went into effect in the 1970s, cases of black lung disease have been declining.

However, in recent years, researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago have found that cases of the worst form of



black lung disease, progressive massive fibrosis, have sharply increased among coal workers in central Appalachia. Kirsten AlMBERG, research assistant and professor of environmental and occupational health sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health, said the increase may be due to smaller mines with less effective dust-reduction systems and exposure to crystalline silica, which is even more damaging to the lungs than dust, during the mining process.

AlMBERG also noted that younger miners who work longer hours and more days per week seem to be especially affected by the resurgence of black lung disease in Appalachia.