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not all accidents ARE CREATED EQUAL

How often have you been traveling in your car or small truck on Interstates like 85, 75 or 20 and observed a tractor trailer closing in on you with frightening speed? Or, found yourself between two large trucks, white knuckles on your steering wheel, hoping that the driver in the truck just outside your window knows you're there?

The fear is justified. U.S. Federal Highway Administration statistics show that nationally in 2008, nearly 75 percent of the 4,229 fatalities resulting from truck crashes were drivers or passengers in cars involved in a collision with a truck. In Georgia, large trucks were involved in just under 10 percent of all fatal crashes in 2008.

With the average weight of a Honda Accord around 3,300 pounds and a loaded freight carrier or big rig that can weigh in at 70,000 pounds or more, the results of a big truck crash can be catastrophic.

Most people don't know that trucking companies often have separate insurance policies representing the tractor, the trailer, and the driver. Since most trucks are owned by large corporations, you are not only fighting them, but potentially several insurance companies as well. These companies

are not looking out for you; they're focused on their own best interests.

If you or someone close to you has been involved in a truck accident, it's important to contact an attorney with truck accident experience. An experienced truck accident attorney will:

- Talk to specialists who know about truck accidents and who might be able to give you information to support your case.
- Understand your case and be able to fight the insurance companies for a fair settlement for the damages you incurred.
- Know the law as it applies to your case. This includes federal and local laws and regulations that apply to insurance and trucking industries.
- Ensure that the evidence in your case is secured and available to you to support your claim.

In short, an experienced truck accident attorney will fight for you, help you recover fair and full damages, and get your life back on track. ■

major settlement

ON SEROQUEL

FINALIZED



While continuing to deny allegations that it illegally marketed and promoted its blockbuster drug Seroquel for unapproved uses, British

pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca recently agreed to pay \$520 million to settle charges brought against it by the U.S. government.

Seroquel had only been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use with patients suffering from schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, but the government contended that AstraZeneca promoted the drug to psychiatrists and doctors for patients with other ailments such as post traumatic stress syndrome, depression, ADHD, Alzheimer's disease, anger management, aggression, and anxiety.

The settlement will be split up among the federal government, the state Medicaid programs and the District of Columbia, with the government's portion coming in at just over \$300 million.

As part of the settlement, AstraZeneca also agreed to enter into a five-year monitoring program to ensure the company's compliance with U.S. laws. The company will also have to send a letter to doctors about the settlement.

Seroquel had estimated sales of nearly \$5 billion in 2009. ■

NIGHTTIME DRIVING + TEENS + CELL PHONES = bad news

Like any other drivers, teenagers face a variety of risks when they get behind the wheel – especially if they drink and drive, speed, or fail to use a seat belt.

But, surprisingly, the biggest risk factor for teenage drivers is driving after dark, according to a recent study conducted by the Texas Transportation Institute.

Researchers who studied traffic fatality rates from 1999 to 2008, found that despite an overall drop in traffic deaths during that time period, nighttime fatalities actually increased. A closer look at the numbers revealed that among drivers over the age of 20, alcohol was to blame for the proportional increase in deaths, but that wasn't the case for teen drivers.

So, what accounted for the rise in teen nighttime traffic deaths? Researchers pointed to one other crucial factor – The huge surge in cell phone use by teenagers during the time period when the 10-year study was conducted.

The study's authors surmise that today's teenagers, having grown up with cell phones, are often so comfortable with a cell phone in their hands that they can develop a false sense of security and figure they can easily text or talk on a cell phone while driving. In fact, one out of every four teenage drivers admits to texting while driving. Unfortunately, that's a decision that leads to disastrous consequences. ■

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

In Georgia, as of July 1, 2010, it is now illegal to use wireless telecommunications devices for writing, sending or receiving text messages while operating a motor vehicle. Offenders will face a \$150 fine and one point on their license. A second new law that also went into effect July 1 prohibits drivers under the age of 18 from using a wireless communication device.

plastic surgery malpractice

A GROWING PROBLEM

More and more people are turning to cosmetic plastic surgery in an attempt to enhance their appearance, correct abnormalities, or improve the way their bodies work. In fact, since 1997 when statistics began to be collected, the number of surgical and non-surgical cosmetic procedures has increased by a staggering 457%, according to Plastic Surgery Research.

Along with the increase in procedures, though, has come an increase in the amount of plastic surgery malpractice claims, especially as more and more “non-plastic” surgeons have begun performing procedures.

Plastic surgery malpractice can leave victims with medical issues that impact them for the rest of their lives or cause undesirable aesthetic results.

Examples of plastic surgery malpractice may include:

- Face lift patients who suffer from an inability to close their eyes or who end up with dry eyes, nerve damage, or excessive scarring which requires additional surgeries.
- Nose job patients who have difficulty breathing or are left with an asymmetrical nose.

- Liposuction which results in organ damage, internal bleeding, disfigurement, numbness or even death.
- Breast surgery complications which include size disparity, infections, numbness, or disfigurement of the breast or nipple.
- Tummy tuck procedures that result in nerve damage, organ damage, ongoing infections, persistent changes in skin color, and scarring from burns or blisters.

Errors by doctors, anesthesiologists, nurses, or hospital staff can leave patients with a lifetime of difficulties. More surgeries, loss of income, debilitating pain, and psychological troubles are often what await these victims. If the individual dies, their loved ones are left dealing with financial loss, medical and funeral expenses, and the anguish of coping with their family member or close friend being taken from them so suddenly.

If you believe you or a loved one has been a victim of plastic surgery malpractice, consult with an experienced malpractice attorney. ■

July Important Dates

July 4 – Independence Day

FAQ

I was involved in an accident and the insurance adjuster said I should just handle the claim myself and not hire an attorney to represent me. Is that what I should do?



As we've stated many times before, insurance companies have one goal in mind: maximizing their profits by paying out as little as possible on any claims. And even though their employees may sound very nice and seem like they want to help you, they do not have your best interests at heart.

Having an experienced personal injury attorney on your side helps protect your rights, gives you leverage against the insurance company (because of a lawsuit or the threat of one), and greatly increases your chances of receiving fair compensation for your injuries. Even studies conducted by the insurance industry itself show that injury victims who hire an attorney receive more compensation than those who do not. ■

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accidents



NOT TREATED THE SAME
SEE PAGE ONE.

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recent product recalls

Despite advancements in overall consumer product safety, there are still many products that we use in our everyday lives that can cause serious injuries. Our firm believes very strongly that public awareness of potentially dangerous products can go a long way toward preventing injuries or harm. To help in that regard, here are a couple of recent product recalls announced by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). For a complete list of recalls as well as tips and information on how to help keep your family safe, please visit www.cpsc.gov.



Hoover Upright Vacuum Cleaners

Hoover Inc. is voluntarily recalling about 108,000 its WindTunnel T-Series™ Bagless Upright Vacuum Cleaners with Cord Rewind Feature. The power cord is not properly routed or securely seated in the cord rewind assembly which can allow the power cord to be pulled loose, posing fire and shock hazards.

Buckyballs® High Powered Magnets

Maxfield and Oberton LLC, is voluntarily recalling about 175,000 Buckyballs® High Powered Magnet Sets. The sets were labeled “Ages 13+” and do not meet the mandatory toy standard F963-08 (effective August 17, 2009) which requires that such powerful magnets not be sold for children under 14. Magnets found by young children can be swallowed or aspirated. If more than one magnet is swallowed, the magnets can attract each other and cause intestinal perforations or blockages, which can be fatal. ■

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