



MONAST
LAW OFFICE

Workers' COMPanion

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DON'T LET PRIDE KEEP YOU FROM HEALING

Being Smart About an Injury Is the True Mark of Strength

June is Men's Health Month, and it feels like as good a time as any to talk about something I see all too often in my line of work: men ignoring injuries at work. For generations, the message has been the same: shake it off, walk it off, suck it up. That cultural conditioning runs deep, especially in blue-collar jobs where toughness is almost a badge of honor. Men are often afraid of being labeled as weak, whiny, or incapable if they admit they're hurt. And yet, those moments of pride can turn into long-term pain, physically and emotionally.

Trust me, I know women also have to deal with pain and injuries, and usually without much complaining. If you knew my mom, you'd know she was tough as nails (especially when she accidentally stepped on one that went deep into her foot and I had to pull it out). But this month, I want to talk about that very male-specific stubbornness that seems to come out when men are injured.

I've represented countless men who delayed reporting injuries because of pride, fear, or the sense that their role as a provider demanded they push through. Work often forms a big part of a man's identity. When injury interrupts that identity, it can feel like a personal failure. On top of that, many men lack a strong support network outside the job site. Work buddies may tease, but outside of work, there isn't always someone to lean on. That isolation only makes it easier to ignore pain, hoping it will magically disappear.

But ignoring an injury rarely makes it better. Knee injuries, back strains, falls from heights, all of these things don't heal themselves if left untreated. In fact, delaying treatment can turn a simple sprain into a chronic condition that jeopardizes your ability to work and provide for your family. Workers'

compensation exists for exactly this reason. It's not a handout. It's a safety net designed to help men and women get the care they need, so they can recover fully and return to work safely.

I've seen guys climb out of a bucket truck after falling 18 feet, brush themselves off, and insist they're fine. I've watched neighbors who could barely walk force themselves onto the job site because they didn't want to be seen as weak. And while I respect their grit, I also know it often comes at a cost, be it prolonged pain, permanent injury, or emotional stress. It doesn't make you less of a man to admit that something hurts. It makes you smart.

Getting help early protects your body, your job, and your family. It's better for everyone when injuries are reported promptly and treated properly. If you're hurt at work, go to a doctor. Don't wait for the pain to "go away on its own." Take advantage of workers' compensation so you can recover without guilt or shame. Think of it not as a compromise of masculinity, but as a responsible choice, one that allows you to continue providing, performing, and living your life fully.

This Men's Health Month, let's rethink what toughness really means. It's not about ignoring pain. It's about taking action to protect yourself, your health, and your family. It's about knowing when to ask for help and having the courage to do it. So, if you're hurt, don't be a hero, just be smart. Report it, treat it, and recover. That's the real strength.

- Jim Monast



THE TRUTH BEHIND ‘DEBT RELIEF’ ADS

SEPARATING REAL HELP FROM RISKY SCHEMES

When every bill feels like a fire drill, it's hard to think straight about money. For some people, the situation can make debt relief ads tempting. The problem is that the phrase “debt relief” can mean a wide variety of things. Some options are legitimate and tightly regulated. Others are scams with good marketing. Before you agree to anything, you need to know what you're signing.

Most of the time, debt relief companies don't give you a loan. They offer to negotiate with your creditors, typically for credit cards, medical bills, and other unsecured debts. In many programs, you stop paying your creditors and instead send money into a separate account. Once that account hits a certain amount, the company uses it to make lump-sum settlement offers.

can set up a debt management plan with a lower interest rate while keeping you in good standing with your creditors.

If you do talk with a for-profit debt relief provider, tread carefully. Avoid working with any company that guarantees it can wipe out a certain amount of debt or claims it's operating under a “new government program.” Be very cautious if anyone tells you to stop talking to your creditors or to ignore their letters and calls. A company that charges upfront fees or refuses to explain its costs in writing should also raise red flags.

That approach can sometimes lower what you owe, but it's risky. While you aren't paying, late fees and interest keep adding up. Your credit score can take a big hit, and there is always the chance a creditor will sue instead of settling. Because of those risks, debt settlement should be considered a last-step option.

Struggling with debt while bills keep piling up is a tough spot for anyone to be in, but you don't want to make a hard situation worse by working with the wrong company. A quick call to a trusted counselor, financial advisor, or attorney can help you choose a plan that protects you over the long term.

Working with a nonprofit credit counseling agency is a much safer option. They start by reviewing your budget and explaining the options available to you. In some cases, these agencies



Caught on Camera

HOW SURVEILLANCE AND SOCIAL MEDIA CAN IMPACT YOUR CLAIM

Filing a workers' compensation claim is supposed to help you recover and get back on your feet, but many people don't realize just how closely their actions may be watched during the process. From social media posts to security footage and even private investigators, what you say and do outside the doctor's office can have a real impact on your case. A little awareness can go a long way in protecting your claim.

THINK BEFORE YOU POST (OR BETTER YET, DON'T POST AT ALL).

If you're dealing with a workplace injury, here's one of the simplest pieces of advice we give clients: **Stay off social media.** It might sound extreme, but posts (be it photos, videos, or even comments) can quickly become evidence in your case.

We've seen it happen. Someone is recovering from an injury, but then a photo surfaces of them doing something that looks questionable, maybe lifting something heavy or enjoying a day out. Even if their doctor cleared the activity, the visual alone can create doubt. And in a hearing, that doubt can carry a lot of weight.

WORK FOOTAGE IS HELPFUL... UNTIL IT'S NOT.

Workplace cameras can actually be a good thing. In many cases, they help prove exactly what happened. We've used footage to clearly show injuries such as factory falls and even workplace assaults. That kind of evidence can be incredibly powerful. But sometimes footage that could support a claim conveniently goes missing or isn't provided. That's why it's important to have someone advocating for you, someone who knows how to request, review, and challenge that footage when necessary.



YES, YOU MIGHT BE WATCHED.

It surprises many people, but private surveillance is very real in workers' comp cases. Insurance companies or employers may hire investigators to observe you in public. We've seen situations where a short clip was used to question a claim, like someone being filmed out running errands or gardening. These snapshots can be misleading, but they still get attention.

PLAY IT SMART TO PROTECT YOUR CLAIM.

The key takeaway here isn't to be paranoid, but to be aware. Workers' compensation exists to help you recover, but your actions during a claim matter. Avoid posting, be mindful in public, and most importantly, follow your doctor's recommendations. Taking a cautious approach now can help protect your claim and your peace of mind later.

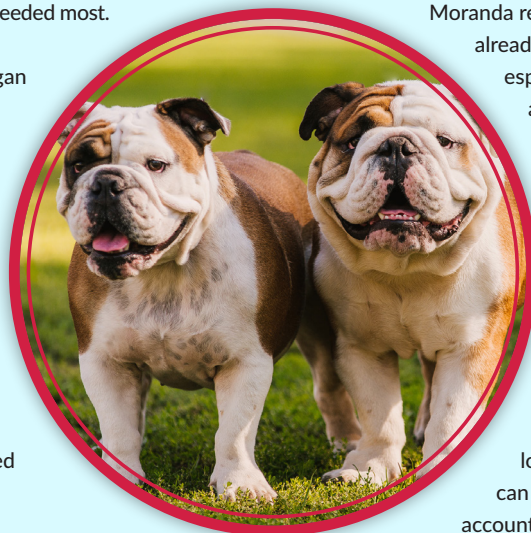
A LOVE STORY WITH WRINKLES

WHEN ONE BULLDOG NEEDED A FRIEND ... SHE FOUND FAMILY

At our firm, we've got a soft spot for English bulldogs with their squishy faces, stubborn charm, and loyal hearts. What's not to love (see "Eats with Ellie" below)? So, when we came across this story, we couldn't resist sharing it. What started as concern for a lonely bulldog turned into something much bigger: a second chance, an unexpected bond, and a reminder that sometimes the right companion comes along exactly when it's needed most.

Back in the summer of 2021, Isabella Moranda began to notice something wasn't quite right with her dog, Maggie. The once-happy 5-year-old bulldog seemed withdrawn, uninterested in food, and just ... off. With Moranda balancing work and her husband, Jake Hanson, frequently away for the NFL, Maggie was spending more time alone than usual.

Hoping to lift her spirits, Moranda decided to try doggy day care. It didn't take long to see a difference. The day care staff shared photos of Maggie happily playing with another bulldog named Gus. The pictures said it all; these two had formed a genuine bond.



Then came the part that changed everything. Gus wasn't just another pup at day care. He had been living there for months after being surrendered by an elderly owner battling terminal cancer. Hearing that, Moranda's heart sank. Suddenly, the cute photos meant something more. This was a dog who needed a second chance. Within minutes of getting home, Moranda reached out to learn more. She and her husband had already talked about bringing another dog into their home, especially for Maggie's sake. Now, the decision felt almost meant to be.

After making sure they were ready, their application was approved, and on Sept. 24, 2021, Gus officially became part of the family. From that moment on, Maggie and Gus have been inseparable. Whether they're curled up together, soaking up the sun, or playing with their toys, they move through life side by side.

For a dog who once felt alone and another who had lost his home, their story feels like perfect timing. You can follow Maggie and Gus' playful antics on their TikTok account: [@rollsandunderbites](#).

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ANSWER



EATS WITH ELLIE GRILLED WHOLE CHICKEN AND VEGETABLES

Fire up the grill and get ready to serve a delicious meal the entire family will love!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole chicken
- 1 lemon, halved
- 2 tsp onion powder
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 bell peppers, quartered
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 1 summer squash, sliced
- 2 red onions, quartered

DIRECTIONS

1. Turn the grill on high heat.
2. Using kitchen shears, cut along both sides of the chicken's backbone and remove it.
3. Turn the chicken over on a baking sheet and press it flat.
4. Squeeze the lemon over the chicken and season with onion powder, salt, and pepper.
5. Brush the chicken and grill grates with olive oil.
6. Place the chicken skin-side down onto the grill.
7. Grill for 12-15 minutes until charred. Flip the chicken and grill for 25-30 minutes. Flip it again and let it cook fully before removing from the grill and letting it rest.
8. Season the vegetables with salt and pepper, then brush them with olive oil.
9. Grill the vegetables for 6-7 minutes, until tender. Enjoy!



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STAMP SCANDAL AND STARLET STRIFE

INSIDE FIERCE CELEBRITY FEUDS

If you think today's celebrity gossip is crazy, these tales of tantrums from the famous make our current news feeds seem tame by comparison!

MARK TWAIN'S MAILROOM MELTDOWN

In 2011, late literary giant Mark Twain received the posthumous honor of being the subject of a commemorative postage stamp by the U.S. Postal Service. While Twain's legendary status in American culture made him an ideal candidate for the tribute, these events likely would have made him turn in his grave.

You see, Twain absolutely *despised* the Postal Service. For decades, he railed against the institution publicly in newspaper columns, criticizing it for everything, from high costs to consumers to what he perceived as outrageously egregious regulations. He once even expressed his indignation over the Postal Service's decision to require a street address and state on outgoing mail in addition to the previously required name

and city. Why? He thought adding these words was a waste of time and ink!

As he wrote in a letter to the Hartford Courant in 1897, "Isn't it odd that we should take a spasm, every now and then, and go spinning back into the dark ages once more, after having put in a world of time and money and work toiling up into the high lights of modern progress?"

Beautifully written? Unquestionably. A tad overdramatic as a response to a minor rule change for mailing letters? Perhaps, but what else could one expect when earning the ire of one of history's most celebrated wordsmiths?

RUTHLESS GLAMOUR GIRLS

Few celebrity feuds have ever been as intense as the fiery conflict between screen legends Bette Davis and Joan Crawford. The two women were savage competitors for decades, sparring over everything from public attention to lovers.

Just as a massive press campaign launched in support of Davis' 1933 film "Ex-Lady," Crawford made headlines by announcing her divorce from Douglas Fairbanks Jr. The focus on Crawford's failed marriage tanked Davis' film, which received minuscule media attention compared to Crawford's gossip-generating announcement. Two years later, Davis fell in love with actor Franchot Tone on the set of the film "Dangerous." Unfortunately, Tone soon directed his affection toward another famous lady. Any guess as to whom?

"She took him from me," Davis reportedly said in an interview more than 50 years later. "She did it coldly, deliberately, and with complete ruthlessness."

In the end, the only thing longer than these ladies' on-screen highlights was their off-screen resentment.