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How to Strengthen Your Disability Claim: Part 1: Setting Up Strong Medical Records

When a sickness or injury affects you long-term, only you fully know the limitations you now have and the pain you're experiencing. Just describing your illness to disability examiners and a judge is unfortunately not legally enough to be able to prove you are disabled. It is important to support your claim with plenty of medical evidence. Here are a few things that you can do to strengthen your disability claim:

- **Treat early & often:** It's important that you seek medical attention right away after you get sick or injured. Do not delay in making an appointment with your physician to get treatment. If your condition is serious enough to keep you out of work, it is certainly serious enough to seek medical treatment with a doctor.
- **Keep personal logs:** Keep a diary of all of your doctor's appointments as well as your daily pain and activity level. By having your experiences and the facts written down you have more evidence to support your case. If there are any particular episodes that you encounter on a regular basis (ie. migraines or seizures) make sure to record as much detail as possible regarding each episode: date, time, & intensity of episode.
- **Follow reasonably prescribed medical treatment plans:** If you fail to follow the medical treatment that was prescribed to you by a doctor, Social Security laws may deny you benefits. If you have concerns or questions about the treatment you were prescribed, express these concerns to your doctor and ask about the possibility of other treatment solutions. Do not just disregard your physician's treatment without speaking to him about your concerns. If after voicing your concerns your doctor continues to prescribe the same treatment, you may want to get a second opinion.
- **Explain your pain in detail:** When describing your pain, it is important to go into detail rather than speaking vaguely. For instance, rather than saying "I just hurt all over and feel like I'm in a daze," it would be better to state, "The pain is in my lower back and shoots down my left leg. I am only able to sit or stand for about 10 minutes before I need to lie down again." Make sure that some or all of these limitations are written in your medical records.
- **Consult a specialist:** The words of a specialist are going to be much more convincing to an ALJ (Administrative Law Judge) than the words of a generalist. If possible, make sure to see a specialist who specializes in your particular condition and record the details of the appointment in addition to the treatment they prescribe.



How is a pickle like a cell phone? Both could cause cancer

A World Health Organization study has classified cell phones as "possibly carcinogenic." But don't throw yours away just yet.

As reported on the ABC News website, WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer found that people who talk on their phones for 30 minutes or more a day over 10 years have a 40 percent higher risk of developing glioma, a rare type of brain tumor. The IARC placed cell phones in its Group 2B, the lowest classification of possible carcinogens, well below cancer-causing agents such as cigarette smoke and asbestos.

For some perspective, the Slate website has reported that after a review of cancer rate studies across Asia, researchers in China have identified a link between pickled vegetables and esophageal cancer. That doesn't mean you should stop eating pickles—different processes use different acids to preserve vegetables, which may affect cancer risk. In pickles and cell phones, apparently moderation is the key.



May is ALS Awareness Month

ALS is amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease. A motor neuron disease characterized by rapidly progressive weakness, muscle atrophy, and difficulty speaking, swallowing, and breathing, ALS affects as many as 30,000 Americans, with 15 new cases diagnosed every day on average.

National Sun Safety Week, June 1-7.

Practice sun safety this week and all year round to protect your skin and eyes. For example: Beware of sunburn, which increases your risk of developing skin cancer. Check your local UV Index for important information to help you plan your outdoor activities and prevent overexposure to the sun. The UV Index forecast is issued each afternoon by the National Weather Service and EPA.

Men's Health Week, June 9-14

Men's Health Week is designed to heighten awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys. This week gives health care providers, public policymakers, the media, and individuals an opportunity to encourage men and boys to seek regular medical advice and early treatment for disease and injury.

Animal Rights Awareness Week, June 19-25

Raising awareness and educating the general public about the need for humane treatment that all animals deserve, no matter if they live as someone's pet, wildlife, residents of a zoo, or a source of food.

Lightning Safety Awareness Week, June 22-28

Summer is the peak season for one of the nation's deadliest weather phenomena—lightning. Lightning strikes peak in summer, although people are struck year round. In the United States, an average of 53 people are killed each year by lightning, and hundreds more are severely injured. Learn what you need to do to stay safe when thunderstorms threaten.

Spring is in the Air, and so is Pollen

How to head off common seasonal allergies and the misery they bring

With winter officially over — even by the groundhog's predictive criteria — burgeoning trees and flowers herald spring and seasonal allergies.

Tree pollens and mold spores can wreak havoc on the 35 million Americans who suffer itchy eyes, runny noses, scratchy throats and fatigue.

Beyond the many over-the-counter and prescription medications available, there are simple steps sufferers can take to reduce their misery:

- 1) Limit your exposure. After months of cabin fever, staying inside with the windows shut tight on a lovely day may seem like torture. But consider the alternative: sneezing and wheezing and rubbing your eyes non-stop isn't fun either.
- 2) Plan your outings carefully. Rainy and non-windy days are best for keeping pollen at bay. Remember, too, that pollen counts peak in the midday hours. Avoid grassy and wooded areas. Check your local news source for pollen counts.
- 3) Park strategically. You've seen how pollen can, on heavy days, turn a white car greenish yellow. If you have a garage, use it for storing your car, not your junk. If you park outside, try to avoid parking under a tree. Your car may be cooler when you get into it, but you'll be less likely to get a nose full of pollen in the process of opening the door.
- 4) Scrub up. When you come back into your home, remove your shoes — or at least do a thorough job of wiping off residual pollen from your excursion. And wash your hands. You may even want to shower and get into some pollen-free duds. When you wash your clothes, use a dryer, rather than an outdoor clothesline.
- 5) Pollen magnets. Carpets and linens, too, can hold on to pollens, so vacuum your rugs and change your sheets more frequently than at other times of the year. That goes for bath towels, too. An in-home air filtration system can help remove irritating particulates.

Other reactions may come from foods. According to a recent article on MSNBC.com, certain raw fruits and vegetables contain profilins, which are proteins found in some pollens and which boost the production of histamine. Eating these foods can unleash swelling, tingling or other irritations in the throat, mouth, eyes, ears, or nose.

The protein in ragweed pollen is also related to the irritants found in cantaloupe, banana, sunflower seeds, zucchini and cucumber. Grass pollen has a parallel to peaches, celery, melons, tomatoes and oranges. Birch pollen is related to a large number of vegetables, fruits and nuts, including potatoes, celery, walnuts, apples, pears, peaches, and cherries and other pitted fruit.

Depending on what you're sensitive to, you'll want to avoid foods like these. This is not a food allergy per se, simply an alternative way for those with allergic rhinitis to suffer.

Ah, spring!



Take Care of Yourself (and Your Skin) in the Sun

Summer means warm weather and sunshine. As enjoyable as that may be, sunshine means increased risk of skin damage due to overexposure.

Protect yourself from harmful rays this summer with this common-sense advice:

- **Choose your times.** When possible, limit your exposure to the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest.
- **Dress appropriately.** Wear loose, light clothing covering your body as much as possible, along with a broad-brimmed hat to protect your face and neck.
- **Check your medications.** Antibiotics and other medications can increase your sensitivity to sunlight. Talk to your doctor about how best to take care of yourself on bright days.
- **Drink lots of water.** Avoid overheating by staying hydrated during hot weather.
- **Use sunscreen liberally.** Your best line of defense is a broad-spectrum sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB rays. Reapply every four hours, or more often if you go swimming or sweat a lot.
- **Examine yourself.** Regularly check your body and skin for any strange or irregular growths that might be caused by sun exposure.



Non-Drug Treatments May Ease Depression

Some 16 million Americans suffer from depression. Antidepressant medications can help keep the most serious consequences of the condition under control, but drugs aren't the only treatment option. Talk with your doctor about these additional approaches to lifting your depression:

- **Exercise.** Aerobic exercise for 20-30 minutes, three times a week, releases mood-altering endorphins. It may produce a positive effect on levels of serotonin and norepinephrine, two chemicals that help the brain regulate mood.
- **Light.** If you suffer from seasonal affective disorder during the winter months, light therapy may help. The treatment involves being exposed to bright light for 15 minutes a day to start. Doctors say this can help relieve symptoms (though it's not a cure) in just a few days.
- **Acupuncture.** Some research suggests that this alternative therapy may be useful in treating depression, although definitive proof hasn't yet been produced. In one study, though, a combination of acupuncture and medication seemed to improve symptoms of depression in some patients.
- **Fish oil.** Those omega-3 fatty acids found in fish oil have lots of positive benefits. One of them may be an ability to replace certain fatty acids that, when low, can create unexpected mood swings and depression.
- **Meditation.** This ancient mindfulness technique may prevent relapses once symptoms of depression have eased. Research suggests it's most effective in combination with antidepressant medications.

Goodness

"Do all the good that you can. By all the means that you can. In all the ways that you can. In all the places that you can. At all the times that you can. To all the people you can. As long as you can."

— John Wesley

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

CYNTHIA'S MOJO MARINADE

INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2 Cups Olive oil | 1 Tbs lemon pepper seasoning |
| 2 Cups orange juice | 2 tsp freshly ground black pepper |
| 1 Cup lime juice | 2 tsp salt |
| 1/2 Cup lemon juice | 1/4 Cup chopped cilantro |
| 3 Tbs of minced garlic | or 2 Tbs of cilantro flakes |
| 1 Cup minced onion | 1 Tbs hot pepper sauce |
| 1 Tbs ground cumin | (Tabasco) optional |
| 2 Tbs oregano flakes | |

DIRECTIONS:

Measure all into blender or food processor. Blend all on high until well blended.

Marinate an entire pork roast overnight or beef or chicken or turkey. Marinade any seafood for only 1 hour. Smoke, grill, bake, broil, pan fry meats according to how you like. This will keep in refrigerator for a couple of weeks. Enjoy!



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At Mann Law we believe we can promise our clients quality service with personal attention. We believe that as our client you are entitled to have the:

1. Right to loyalty to you and your cause.
2. Right to be updated regularly and in a timely manner as to the progress of your case.
3. Right to our respect.
4. Right to expect competence from our firm and all who work here.
5. Right to know the truth about your case.
6. Right to prompt attention from us.
7. Right to have your legal rights and options explained in plain English without legal mumbo jumbo.
8. Right to a fair written fee agreement with our firm.
9. Right to a fair fee for the work we do.
10. Right to make the ultimate decision on your case.

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Make Sure to Wash Those Fruits & Veggies!

What could be better for your health than fresh fruits and vegetables? But even the ripest apple or the leafiest lettuce can carry dirt and nasty bacteria that need to be thoroughly washed off before it's safe to eat. Follow these tips for making sure your produce is untainted:

- **Start with a clean slate.** Wipe down your kitchen counter, scrub your knives and cutting boards, and wash your hands before cleaning your food.
- **Water is best.** Don't use soap or detergents to wash your produce; they can seep into the items and potentially make people sick. Use cool water and wash for 30 to 60 seconds in most cases. Some nutritionists say that a mixture of three parts water and one part white vinegar or lemon juice is even more effective, as long as you thoroughly rinse the produce when you're done.
- **Wash peeled food, too.** Dirt and microbes can hide in the crevices of such fruits and orange and bananas, so even though you don't eat the skin, washing it prevents the spread of harmful material from the peel to the fruit through contact with your fingers.
- **Don't wash and store.** Wait until you're ready to eat the item in question. If you wash it and then stick it in the refrigerator, it will retain moisture and spoil faster.
- **Use a brush.** For firmer fruits and vegetables such as apples and potatoes, a stiff vegetable brush can do a good job of removing dirt and particles you don't want to eat.

The Perfect Solution

How do you address dilemmas in your life? Is there a way to find a solution to two conflicting problems?

An employer once offered the following scenario to some candidates for an important job:

"You are driving along in your car on a wild, stormy night. You pass by a bus stop, and you see three people waiting for the bus: One is an old woman who's obviously very ill; another is a close friend who once saved your life; the third is the perfect mate you've been looking for your whole life. What do you do?"

The options are obvious: You could pick up the old woman and possibly save her life; you could offer a ride to your friend to repay him (or her) for once having saved you; or you could invite your perfect mate because you may never find him or her again.

The best candidate gave this answer: "I would give the car keys to my friend and ask him take the old woman to the hospital. Then I'd stay behind and wait for the bus with the woman of my dreams."

