

News You Can Use from Keefe Disability Law

800-776-2929

Dedicated to helping you win Social Security Disability Insurance benefits (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income benefits (SSI) from Social Security.

Massachusetts • Rhode Island • New Hampshire • Vermont



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COPD – Another Serious Consequence of Smoking

If you needed another compelling reason to stop smoking, look no further than COPD. COPD, which is short for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, is a condition that makes it more and more difficult to breathe over time because of damage that has been done to the lungs, usually as a result of being exposed to smoke (direct or second-hand). In some cases, long-term occupational exposure to chemical fumes, vapors and dusts can also lead to COPD.

Two of the most common conditions that make up the disease are emphysema and chronic asthmatic bronchitis. While most instances of COPD can be traced to long-term smoking, it can usually be prevented by not smoking at all or by quitting soon after you start.

Unfortunately, once COPD takes hold and symptoms appear, significant lung damage has most likely already occurred and typically will continue to get worse, eventually interfering with the normal exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide in your lungs. This type of lung damage is irreversible, and as a result, treatments are geared to controlling symptoms and limiting additional damage.

Some common symptoms of COPD can include:

- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Chronic cough
- Tightness in the chest



COPD is a condition that may qualify you for Social Security Disability or SSI benefits. In evaluating whether or not your condition is severe enough to qualify you for benefits, the Social Security Administration (SSA) will be looking for a definitive diagnosis of COPD and will take into consideration the severity of your symptoms, what types of treatments you are receiving, and how you are responding to those treatments. In addition, the SSA will evaluate such things as your ability to perform day-to-day tasks, move around, and the extent to which COPD limits you.

Even if you do not meet the strict medical requirements related to COPD, you may still qualify for SSD or SSI benefits as a result of other factors such as your age, job history, and education.

Whether you've already applied for benefits and been denied or are considering applying, please call our office if you have any questions regarding your specific condition and how it can impact your eligibility. We're here to help you. ■

Chicken Shish Kebob

(This month's great grilling recipe was submitted by Pam Day)

Prep Time: 30 Minutes
 Cook Time: 10 Minutes
 Ready In: 4 Hours 40 Minutes
 Servings: 6



Pam Day

Chicken chunks are marinated in yogurt, lemon juice, and several spices before being skewered with onions and bell peppers. Don't be tempted to substitute sour cream for the yogurt, as you need yogurt as a meat tenderizer. I like to add a little cayenne pepper for more zip.

Ingredients

1/4 cup lemon juice	1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom
1/4 cup vegetable oil	2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into 2 inch pieces
3/4 cup plain yogurt	2 onions, cut into large chunks
4 cloves garlic, minced	1 large green bell pepper, cut into large chunks
2 teaspoons tomato paste	1 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 1/2 teaspoons salt	
1 teaspoon dried oregano	
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper	
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice	
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon	

Directions

Whisk together the lemon juice, vegetable oil, plain yogurt, garlic, tomato paste, salt, oregano, pepper, allspice, cinnamon, and cardamom in a large bowl; add the chicken and toss to coat. Transfer the chicken mixture into a large plastic bag; refrigerate at least 4 hours.

Preheat an outdoor grill for medium-high heat and lightly oil grate. Thread the chicken, onions, and pepper onto metal skewers. Cook on preheated grill until the chicken is golden and no longer pink in the center, about 5 minutes each side. Sprinkle the parsley over the skewers. ■

To The Staff of Keep Disability Free

Thank you for all the help you provided to bring this issue to it's closure. Though it's been a long time it was defenately worth the wait. Thanks again from myself and my family. Bless you!

Sincerely

Sharon

Frequently Asked Questions from Our Clients

Q: How important is medical evidence for my SSA disability application?

A: Accurate, complete and up-to-date medical evidence is probably the most important thing you need to receive Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits. In fact, lack of medical evidence is one of the main reasons SSA disability claims are denied.

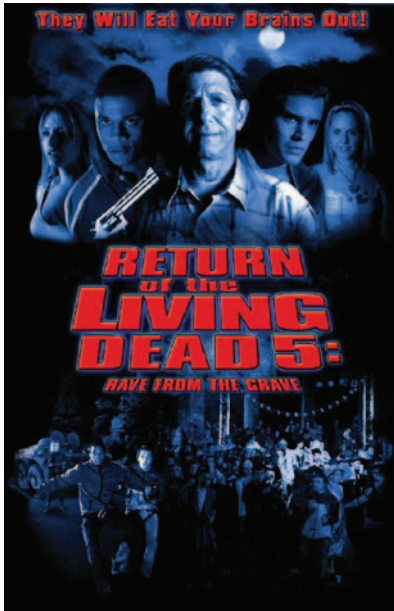
Generally, your medical evidence should include:

- A complete record of all the medical treatment you have received in connection with your condition.
- Medical evidence that your condition prevents you from working.
- In addition, your medical records should reflect the fact that you will not be able to work for at least 12 months or that your condition will result in death.
- Documentation that you are following your doctor's orders for your treatment, getting and taking your prescribed medicines, and participating in any kind of physical therapy recommended by your doctor.

You should also be sure to show up to any and all medical appointments with SSA doctors.

SSA requirements can be very complicated and confusing when it comes to winning your claim. An experienced disability attorney can help you sort out the many pieces of evidence you need and help you track down any necessary paperwork you may be missing. If you have questions about medical evidence for your claim, please call our office. ■

Johnny in Rave from the Grave



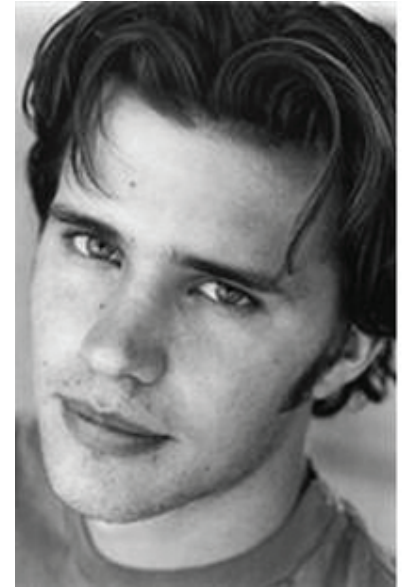
I was switching channels on cable TV one recent Sunday and came across my son Johnny starring in a “Zombie” movie. You don’t really expect that when you go looking for a college basketball game or a “chick flick” to watch. Johnny is our third child, now in his early 30’s, living in London with his wife Amy and their two daughters, Martha (4) and June (2).

Johnny majored in Latin at Harvard University, then was a Latin and Religion teacher for two years at St. Sebastian’s school in Massachusetts. Then he set off for California to see if he could make his way as an actor in Hollywood.

After signing with an agent and auditioning for parts over the next several years, Johnny landed a role in *Proof*, a movie with Gwyneth Paltrow, and a guest lead in one episode of the TV show, *The Practice*. He got the lead in two horror films,

Return of the Living Dead: Rave from the Grave and *Return of the Living Dead: Necropolis* and also performed with actor Jake Broder in a live, two-person show called *Lord Buckley in LA*.

Johnny now works in London for Code:Red a US software company providing investment software for hedge funds, pensions funds and endowments in Europe and the US. ■



Important Update

Federal Budget Cuts Force Reduced Public Hours

Local Social Security offices are now on a new schedule: they are open to the public Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. – a reduction of 30 minutes each weekday.

While agency employees will continue to work their regular hours, this shorter public window will allow them to complete face-to-face service with the visiting public without incurring the cost of overtime. Congress provided Social Security with nearly \$1 billion less than the President requested for the budget this fiscal year, which makes it impossible for the agency to provide the amount of overtime needed to handle service to the public as they have in the past.

Most Social Security services do not require a visit to an office. For example, anyone wishing to apply for benefits, sign up for direct deposit, replace a Medicare card, obtain a proof of income letter or inform Social Security of a change of address or telephone number may do so at www.socialsecurity.gov or by dialing their toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213. Of course, at Keefe Disability Law we help our clients with initial applications as well as with appeals in their disability claims. Just call us at 1-800-776-2929 or log onto our website at www.KeefeLaw.com. ■

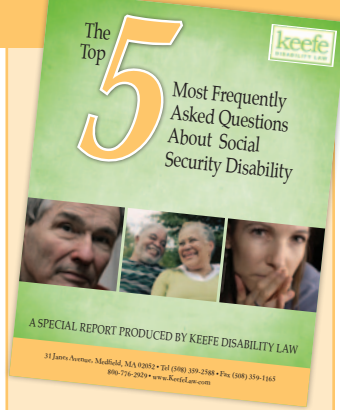


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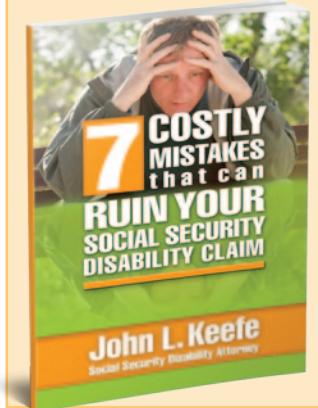
Johnny in Rave from the Grave



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This publication is intended to educate the general public regarding the Social Security Disability claims process, health conditions and other issues. It is for informational purposes only and not intended to be legal advice. Because each case is different, you should consult with an experienced Social Security Disability attorney before acting on any information contained here.

Staff Member Spotlight



At Keefe Disability Law, we're fortunate to have a terrific staff in place to help our clients navigate their Social Security Disability claims. Since we all pick up the phone at our firm, we'd like you to get to know a little bit more about the individuals who make up our team. This issue our spotlight is on **Brittany Brown**, a lawyer who joined our office last year.

Born: Indianapolis, Indiana, but grew up mostly in the Marietta, GA, area

Lives: Waltham, MA

Fiancée: Noah. Getting married on September 8, 2012.

Undergraduate: University of Georgia

Law School: Northeastern University

First Job: Hostess at Buffalo's Café in Marietta, GA

What's on your iPod? Country, Top 40. I like The Band Perry, Lady Antebellum and Zach Brown.

What are you reading? *Game Change* by John Heilemann and Mark Halperin. Also, *The Girl Who Played with Fire*, by Stieg Larsson.

Favorite place to visit: Back home in Georgia.

Favorite meal: Gluten-free pizza, when I can find it.

Like to do when not at work: My fiancée and I take Salsa dance lessons, and we just finished up a bowling league.

Favorite sports team: Georgia Bulldogs.

Favorite TV Show: *Top Chef*. We even watch *Top Chef Canada* online!

Person in history I'd most like to meet: Dr. Seuss

What's on your bucket list? Once I retire from law, I'd like to maybe open up a nice hostel in Central America, on a beach.

Favorite quote: "No snowflake in an avalanche ever feels responsible." Voltaire

Pet peeves: When my fiancée doesn't dry his feet after getting out of the shower. Unmade beds.

Surprising fact about you: I went to school in Kingston, Jamaica, for a short time while studying international politics during an election year. ■