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## Keep Your Brain Young

### 3 Tips for Good Brain Health From Harvard Medical School

As we age, our bodies change, including our mental functions. Cognitive decline is one of the biggest fears of aging, but it's not inevitable. Though we're still learning new things about how our brains work, there's a lot of scientific research that shows how to keep your brain young. If you want to keep your mind sharp throughout your lifetime, then follow this advice from Harvard Medical School.

#### 1. Get a good workout.

Exercising regularly helps all the muscles and organs in your body, even your brain! A good workout can lower your blood pressure and improve your cholesterol levels, which help your brain and your heart. Harvard Health Publishing, a website of Harvard Medical School, also notes that "animals who exercise regularly increase the number of tiny blood vessels that bring oxygen-rich blood to the region of the brain that is responsible for thought."

#### 2. Pay attention to your mental health.

Poor mental health can lead to impaired cognitive function. Chronic anxiety, depression, and exhaustion tend to cause low scores on cognitive function tests. But test scores aren't necessarily a sign of future cognitive decline, and Harvard Health Publishing

urges readers to maintain good mental health and get restful sleep, as they are "certainly important goals" for improving cognitive function and overall well-being.

#### 3. Stay connected.

It's not enough to focus on yourself. In order to maintain your long-term cognitive health, you should also focus on your connections with other people. According to Harvard Health Publishing, "Strong social ties have been associated with a lower risk of dementia, as well as lower blood pressure and longer life expectancy." Make new friends, stay in touch with family members, and maintain positive relationships in your life.

They say an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This is certainly true when it comes to your brain health. Do what you can today to protect your mental functions tomorrow.



## The Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro, P.A.

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## Among the Stars

The Truth Is Out There

If you'd asked me how I thought the first half of 2020 would go, a pandemic wouldn't have been high on my list of predictions. A lot of spring plans had to be changed to adhere to stay-at-home orders and social distancing guidelines. Lots of folks have spent the last few weeks holed up watching Netflix, so this month I'd like to recommend one of my favorite shows. Have you heard of "Ancient Aliens"?

My wife likes to tease me for watching this show. To her credit, the premise is pretty wild. "Ancient Aliens" is a documentary series on the History Channel that really dives into the ancient astronaut theory. The idea is that aliens visited Earth in ancient times and evidence of these visits can be found in ancient mythologies, artwork, and other architectural discoveries.

Each episode of "Ancient Aliens" focuses on a specific element of human culture that these interstellar visitors might have had a hand in, from strange ancient technologies to the Great Pyramids. Now, I'll be the first to say that some of these ideas are pretty far-fetched. Do I believe Bigfoot is an alien? Of course not. But I still enjoy watching the show and asking, "What if?"

Even believing in aliens is a pretty geeky thing, but it's a surprisingly common belief. Last year, Newsweek reported that 54% of Americans believe intelligent life exists on other planets. When you look at how big the universe is, how can you not believe other life exists somewhere among the stars?

Astronomers estimate there are around 2 trillion galaxies in the observable universe. Each of these galaxies has around 100 billion stars. This means there are 1 billion trillion stars in the universe! Not all of those stars are orbited by planets, like our sun, but some are. In the Milky Way alone, scientists have discovered planets orbiting 2,500 other stars.

Are we supposed to believe that among all the possible planets orbiting all those stars across the universe, our planet is the only one filled with life? Just look at the strange life-forms we've discovered in our own oceans. If we can have weird-looking octopuses and glowing fish swimming around in the deep sea, how many different life forms could be out there on other planets?

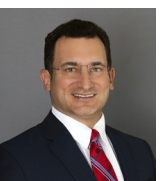
For me, the question isn't "Is there life out there?" When you look at the math, there's no doubt about it! I like to ask, "How did that life visit Earth?" The nearest star to us, besides our sun, is Proxima Centauri, just 4.22 light-years from Earth. That doesn't seem far until you realize that a single light-year is 5.88 trillion miles. If aliens did visit Earth, as "Ancient Aliens" suggests, how did they get here? What kind of technology did they have? How old was their civilization in order to have developed that kind of technology? These are the kind of questions I ask when I look up at the stars at night.

This show isn't for everyone, but I really enjoy watching a few episodes when things are stressful. It's good for a brief escape. Before watching "Ancient Aliens," I was never big into aliens or UFOs. While the show can be pretty wild at times, I give it credit for helping me realize just how big our universe really is and all the possibilities it holds.



*"When you look at how big the universe is, how can you not believe other life exists somewhere among the stars?"*

*Marc L. Shapiro*





# The Final Frontier

## NASA Takes You on a (Virtual) Space Adventure

Commercial space travel might still be the stuff of science fiction stories, but thanks to computer programs and augmented reality, your family can still experience what it's like to explore space. NASA and other organizations provide a wealth of free resources that make space exploration come to life for stargazers and future astronauts alike. Take some time to explore a few of our favorites today.

### Touring the International Space Station

First launched in 1998, the International Space Station is a multinational space research laboratory. Nineteen different nations have sent astronauts, cosmonauts, and space tourists to the space station to conduct scientific experiments. It's truly the stuff science fiction dreams are made of! In 2012, Expedition 33 Commander Sunita Williams filmed a full tour of this amazing floating lab and even included a quick lesson on how to work out in zero gravity. "Visit" the space station for yourself at [Bit.ly/ISSTour](https://bit.ly/ISSTour).

### Exploring Deep Space Via Virtual Reality

On Jan. 30, 2020, NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope concluded its 16-year mission researching exoplanets, which are planets outside our solar system. This data was used to create Exoplanet Excursions, an immersive virtual reality experience that lets your family experience the Spitzer's discoveries and control the telescope yourself. These incredible excursions are available on Oculus or Steam, so visit [Spitzer.Caltech.edu/vr](https://spitzer.caltech.edu/vr) to start your adventure and explore deep space today!

### Planet-Hopping With NASA

Have you ever wondered would it be like to stand on another world? Then "book" your next vacation with the Exoplanet Travel Bureau! This program takes you on digital tours of real exoplanets NASA has discovered. Though we don't know what the surfaces of these worlds look like, artists have used scientific data to create 3D landscapes to explore. See them all, from Kepler-16b to TRAPPIST-1e, at [Exoplanets.NASA.gov/alien-worlds/exoplanet-travel-bureau](https://exoplanets.nasa.gov/alien-worlds/exoplanet-travel-bureau).



## Refunds and Higher Settlements

### Did Insurance Companies Have a Change of Heart?

*"I got a refund check back from my insurance company! Why are they being so nice?"*

Over the last couple months, you or someone you know might have received a refund check from their auto insurance company. You may have also seen the ads from insurance companies, which suggest these refunds are an attempt to help their clients during the COVID-19 pandemic. This behavior isn't typical for insurance companies. What prompted this change of heart?

The truth is that the COVID-19 pandemic is responsible for these refunds, but these checks aren't a gesture of generosity from the insurance companies. Over the last few months, there have been far fewer cars on the road. As a result, there have been fewer accidents. While you might think this would be good news for insurance companies who don't want to pay out claims, not paying out enough in claims can get insurance companies in trouble with the Department of Insurance (DOI) in Florida.

Much like how the Nevada Gaming Commission regulates the gambling industry in Las Vegas and sets rules on what percentage the slot machines must pay out, the DOI regulates the percentages that the auto insurance industry must pay out in claims relative to the premiums they take in. If significantly more premiums are taken in than claims paid out, the DOI may cut the number of premiums auto insurers are allowed to charge the next year. This is what insurance companies are afraid of.

In order to avoid having to cut premiums in future years, insurance companies are giving back 20%–25% of premiums to insurers. They are also paying out much higher settlements much more frequently. What does this mean for you? At the moment, personal injury attorneys have the opportunity to help clients settle their cases more quickly and for better money than the insurance company would usually agree to. This may not happen with every single case, but it is a good sign for many injured folks eager to see their case closed quickly.

## Fig Caprese Salad

*It's sweet. It's savory. It's the  
embodiment of summer!*

### Ingredients

- 8 oz buffalo mozzarella or fresh mozzarella
- 8 oz ripe fresh figs, quartered lengthwise
- Handful of basil leaves, roughly chopped
- Flaked sea salt, to taste
- Coarse ground black pepper, to taste
- Olive oil, to taste

### Directions

1. Tear mozzarella into bite-size pieces. Arrange on a platter.
2. Place quartered figs, flesh up, around mozzarella.
3. Sprinkle basil leaves over top.
4. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Drizzle with olive oil.



## When Your Life Is Forever Changed

### What Are Our Clients Saying?

"Choosing legal representation after a car accident is one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. It is my experience that Marc Shapiro and his legal team are the absolute best!

"Three years ago, I was stopped at a red light and rear-ended by a Ford F-150 pickup truck going 45 mph, full force, with 'no breaks.' The accident damaged eight discs in my neck and back and caused a mild traumatic brain injury. My life changed forever in that instant. My husband and I were referred to the *Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro, P.A.* and met with them the next day. Nothing could have prepared us for the physical, emotional, mental, social, financial, and spiritual impact the accident would have on the next three years. Luckily, Marc and his team knew what was coming and guided us through the process. On top of the pain and suffering that only got worse, the insurance company's attorney did everything possible to try and discredit me, lie about my injuries, and prevent me from having the spinal surgery I desperately needed. My legal team was always one step ahead of them.

"Without James, Eric, Marc, and Gerta advocating and fighting for my husband and me, we are not sure where we would be now. I truly do not know if I would still be alive. Dr. Roush implanted two prosthetic discs in my neck, fused one, and cleaned up a disc in my lower back. I would do the surgery again tomorrow if I had to. They made sure the surgery and over 150 medical appointments I attended were paid in full. During mediation, I felt like I had close family fighting for me, and in the end, we walked out feeling relieved for the first time in years. We are forever grateful for all they have done for us.

"I know a guardian angel intervened when my husband was told to call Marc Shapiro's office the night of the accident. You will feel the same way too!"

*—Annika Matos*



### How Are We Doing?

Feedback from our clients lets us know how we're doing. Please tell us about your experiences by leaving a review on Google or on our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/AttorneyShapiroLaw](https://Facebook.com/AttorneyShapiroLaw). Your support empowers us in our mission to help as many people as possible.