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**Briefs**  
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**Stomach Ache Leads To Million Dollar Settlement**

**August 2012**



During the early morning of July 4, 2007, Michael Enriquez went to the emergency room of a local hospital complaining of nausea, vomiting, loose stool, and severe stomach pain for two days. After being forced to sign an admission form which indicated that most of the doctors that would treat him were not employees of the hospital, he was taken into the emergency room. A CT Scan taken subsequently confirmed that he was suffering from a high grade small bowel obstruction.

Mr. Enriquez was admitted by the attending physician who requested an urgent surgical evaluation. Within a couple of hours, Michael began running a temperature and his heart rate began to increase.

By 6:00 p.m., when the surgeon saw Michael, his heart rate was 145 and his blood pressure had begun to drop. Instead of electing to operate the night of July 4, the surgeon ordered a series of tests. Michael was then admitted to the ICU.

While in the ICU overnight, Michael's condition began to quickly deteriorate. By 2:00 a.m., Michael's heart rate was in the 170s and his blood pressure had dropped to 90/70. He also had a fever. The nurse tried calling the attending physician who did not return calls because his paging system was not working. Unfortunately, the nurse failed to reach out to the surgeon. By the time the sun rose, Michael was suffering from septic shock and was rushed to surgery where an exploratory laparotomy was performed. Multiple adhesions and a kink in the small bowel was discovered and relieved.

Although Michael's condition initially began to improve, his heart rate again began to increase and his blood pressure began to decrease shortly thereafter. As a result of all the fluids that Michael received the night before to treat his low blood pressure, he developed abdominal compartment syndrome. Abdominal compartment syndrome occurs when the abdomen is subject to increased pressure. It is incredibly dangerous and can be life threatening. Consequently, later that evening he was rushed for another surgery. By this time, Michael's bowels were so swollen that the surgeon could not close his abdomen. When the surgery was concluded his bowels remained exposed.

Michael's wife was told to prepare for the worst, as his condition continued to deteriorate. Eventually, Michael was stabilized and transferred to Jackson Memorial Hospital, where over the course of several months, his health began to improve.

Today, Michael is healthy and able to enjoy the company of his wife and two children. This recovery does not take away from the fact that Michael was unable to work for two years and spent approximately six months following this ordeal in the hospital.

A local attorney contacted David Sampedro to see if he could help Michael. After contacting a board certified surgeon, suit was filed. After approximately two years of litigation, the case was resolved at mediation for the sum of \$1,000,000.00. Hopefully this settlement will help Michael and his family pay for his medical bills and get him out of the economic hole this medical neglect caused.

\* The names of the parties have been changed as a result of a confidential settlement.

Panter, Panter & Sampedro, P.A., is an A.V. rated law firm comprised of highly experienced trial lawyers with more than 86 years of combined experience. The firm welcomes referrals from other lawyers and honors the Florida Bar rules related to referral fees. Panter, Panter & Sampedro, P.A., is dedicated to protecting Florida's families in the areas of catastrophic injury and wrongful death when dealing with personal injury, premises liability, medical malpractice, nursing home neglect, product liability, aviation, defective medical devices, and mass tort.

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**News:**

**David Sampedro Board Certified in Civil Trial Law**

David Sampedro, of Panter, Panter & Sampedro, P.A., has become board certified by The Florida Bar in the area of civil trial law. Board certification is the highest level of evaluation by The Florida Bar of the competency and experience of an attorney in an area of law approved for certification. Board-certified lawyers must show substantial involvement in the field of law for which certification is sought, pass an exam, satisfy a peer review assessment of their competency in the specialty field plus character, ethics and professionalism in the practice of law, and satisfy the certification areas continuing legal education requirements. Approximately seven percent of eligible Florida Bar Members have earned board certification in one or more of the twenty-four specialty areas approved by The Florida Supreme Court and administered by The Florida Bar. David Sampedro continues to focus his practice in the areas of general and catastrophic negligence, premises liability, automobile negligence and medical malpractice.



NOTE: The accounts of recent trials, verdicts and settlements contained in this newsletter are intended to illustrate the experience of the firm in a variety of litigation areas. Each case is unique, and the results in one case do not necessarily indicate the quality or value of any other case.