

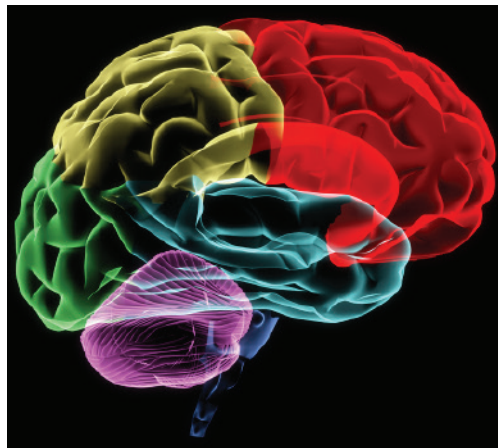
# Radiologist misreads medical images and fails to diagnose dangerous artery blockage

**Months later, reevaluation shows permanent neurological damage; negligence resulted in \$1.75 million settlement.**

In December 2015, John Smith (not his real name), a 59-year-old south Florida resident, experienced a sudden onset of headache and numbness in his left arm along with a tingling sensation. He promptly went to a local hospital seeking medical care. An imaging study of John's head and neck was ordered by the emergency room doctor. A radiologist reported a moderate stenosis of the proximal right "external" carotid artery – the artery that feeds the face and neck, not the brain. Attention then turned to John's heart to rule out any cardiac disease that might have caused the symptoms. An echocardiogram revealed no problems. He was discharged a few days later.

Unbeknownst to John or his subsequent treating physicians, John was a ticking time bomb when he left the hospital. He had an occluded

right "internal" carotid artery that the radiologist had incorrectly identified as the right "external" carotid artery. The blocked right internal carotid artery was compromising blood flow to John's brain. Recurring symptoms began nine months later in September 2016. He was re-evaluated in the emergency room of the same hospital. Head and neck scans confirmed a 50% to 70% narrowing of John's right internal carotid artery leading to an acute right hemispheric stroke with areas of necrosis in the right parieto-occipital and right frontal lobes. John had permanent neurological damage from the acute brain injury, including vision loss, left-side weakness, and sensory deficits. He also suffered substantial cognitive and behavioral damage.



John contacted SDSBS attorney **Jordan Dulcie** for help in dealing with the severe physical and emotional damages he was now experiencing. Mr. Dulcie began working on John's case and quickly saw that the imaging study from 2015 had been misread. It was a direct result of negligence by the radiologist who had misidentified the location of John's vascular blockage. Mr. Dulcie filed a lawsuit in July 2018. The defendant radiologist quickly tendered his \$250,000 malpractice policy, even though

he still denied that he had misread the imaging study. The radiologist did acknowledge that the study should have read "internal" carotid artery stenosis. The radiologist's employer and the hospital were not as quick to acknowledge the damages that John and his wife had suffered.

During the pending medical malpractice litigation, John was involved in a motor vehicle crash and injured his lower back. Attorney Jordan Dulcie brought a claim

against the negligible driver who had caused the accident and was able to secure a \$262,500 settlement for John as the medical malpractice case continued.

The radiologist's employer, a national company with billions in revenue, claimed there was only a \$1 million liability policy. In December 2020, after two years of hard work and a trial date suspended due to COVID, Mr. Dulcie secured a settlement for \$1,750,000 for John and his wife. The much-needed money will help meet John's ongoing medical needs and help the family cope with the damage that deprived them of the joys and experiences they had looked forward to sharing. ♦

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