

Makin' It Better Newsletter

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The thought of a high-speed, head-on crash rightly engenders dread. Upon impact, passengers of the vehicle(s) involved are flung forward at the same speed their vehicle had been traveling. Adding to the danger is the fact that most head-ons aren't square. Research has shown that the less the front of the car is involved in a head-on impact, the greater the chance of fatal injuries to the occupants of the vehicle.

This is due to the fact that glancing blows will cause the car to rotate (offset crash). This rotation causes bodies inside to move sideways and to miss the airbags. Meanwhile, the corners of the car are caving in toward the front-seat passengers to do harm.

Head-on crashes that aren't square also lend themselves to potential ricochets that wind up in secondary impacts and further damage to the occupants. Add in the possibility of fire and explo-

sion, and you have a concoction of dangers that elevates the hazards to victims of offset crashes.

Take these accident precautions to better your odds on the road:

- **Slow down.** Your reaction time and deceleration time will both be improved.
- **Turn off the cellular device.** The distraction of glancing at your phone may take away time from braking when you need it. The smallest difference can determine life or death.
- **Purchase the right car.** Some cars' safety cells perform better than others in tests. Shop wisely.
- **Get yourself to a doctor if you're in an**

offset crash.

Many people have walked away from offset crashes seemingly unscathed, only to die later from undetected internal injuries.



the shape of things to come?

3-D printers have been a subject of intrigue for a few years now, but the perspective on them is rapidly changing from conversation piece to accessible reality. It won't be long before small businesses and households will lay claim to one.



Photo: Intel Free Press

Experts believe it's not a matter of if, but what room to place it in.

3-D printers were a phenomenal success at the recent 2014 International Consumer Electronics Show held in January in Las Vegas. Many got a taste of 3-D printers—literally—as they sampled some sugary origami-like sculptures that dazzled the eyes and the taste buds. The food printer, manufactured by ChefJet Pro, could print in chocolate, too, which has likely caused many a tongue to wag in the party and wedding planning industries.

Mass customization is a by-product of the 3-D printing phenomenon. Industries that previously reused molds are now considering making every piece of whatever they manufacture a unique, one-time design that is customized to each buyer. And that can extend into some rather useful areas, including prosthetics. Not only is a critical piece of equipment designed, it's done so inexpensively.

Previously, a 3-D printer was limited by its size as to what it could print. Now, bigger models are being produced for those who desire bigger objects. Even better, with folds and bends incorporated into designs, some models can print objects much larger than themselves.

Copyright laws and regulations for certain products (e.g., firearms) need to be dealt with in time. But with prices dropping and applications increasing, 3-D printers are beginning to leave their footprint on the economic landscape. ■



The Komodo dragon, the largest lizard alive today, has lived in relative evolutionary isolation over the eons, today inhabiting a handful of Indonesian islands. They look the part of a lizard—long, flat heads; rounded snouts; scaly skin; bowed legs; and huge, muscular tails—except that they can grow up to 10 feet in length and weigh 200–300 pounds.

When it comes to prey, Komodo dragons aren't picky. They'll devour pigs, goats, deer, dogs, and water buffalo. They'll even turn against their own. Humans shouldn't get too cozy either. The Komodo lies patiently in wait, its camouflage concealing its presence. When some unfortunate creature happens by, the Komodo launches its attack with sharp claws and serrated teeth. If anything manages to escape the initial attack, it will only be a matter of time before the vile saliva of the dragon will claim its victim, as it is infested with over 50 strains of deadly bacteria. To make matters worse for victims, Komodos can run up to 11 mph in short bursts, and they're pretty good swimmers.

Komodo dragons are also efficient partakers. They forsake only about 12 percent of their prey, and hooves, bones, and hide go down the gullet smoothly. To compare, lions waste about 35 percent of a carcass.

There are approximately 4,000–5,000 Komodos in the wild today, but a dearth of breeding females, volcanic activity, poaching, tourism, and fire are placing stress on its population, relegating it to the endangered species list. ■

exciting potential

OF CANCER IMMUNOTHERAPY

With cancer immunotherapy, the power of the immune system is harnessed/redirected/reprogrammed to wipe out tumor cells that may be present in the body. The immune system is targeted by immunotherapy, not the tumor itself.

The immune system keeps track of all the substances that are native to the body. Bacteria, viruses, and parasites all have substances on their outer surfaces—for example, various proteins. When they invade the body, the immune system sees that these proteins are not on the guest list and springs into action to evict the intruders.

But it seems the body is far better at recognizing and attacking the foreign substances mentioned above than it is at detecting cancer cells. That's because cancer cells and normal cells have far fewer clear differences. Instead of being foreign invaders, cancer cells are more akin to traitors within the ranks.

Adding to the confusion, sometimes, cancer cells emit their own substances that give the immune system the false impression that everything is OK.

Some immunotherapy treatments used to treat cancer include:

- **Monoclonal antibodies**, man-made versions of immune system proteins that can be designed to attack a very specific part of a cancer cell.
- **Nonspecific immunotherapies**, which boost the immune system in a very general way, giving the immune system more eyes and ears to weed out troublemakers.
- **Cancer vaccines**, which trigger an immune response to certain cancers caused by viruses.

Immunotherapy has already benefited many people facing dire situations. With more research, it is hoped that many more will stand to gain. ■

March 2014 Important Dates

March 4 – Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday
March 5 – Ash Wednesday
March 9 – Daylight Saving Time Begins
March 17 – St. Patrick's Day
March 20 – Spring Begins

did you know? Sitting can kill you.

It sounds harsh, but it really is true. Recent studies have shown that sitting for long periods of time each day can be just as dangerous to our health as smoking. And no wonder; prolonged sitting is associated with an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, premature death, and cancer. On a positive note, doctors say that even a 10-minute brisk walk a few times a day can make a big difference in offsetting the effects of prolonged sitting. And, while not as good as walking or regular exercise, even getting up from your chair at least once an hour and moving around can be helpful. ■



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This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury, on the job injuries, Social Security, and other issues. It is for information purposes only and is not intended to be legal advice. Prior to acting on any information contained here, you should seek and retain competent counsel. The information in this newsletter may be freely copied and distributed as long as the newsletter is copied in its entirety.

the story of St. Patrick



St. Patrick is probably one of Christianity's most famous Saints. However, many of the stories of St. Patrick are the product of tall tales told through the ages. St. Patrick did not banish snakes from Ireland. St. Patrick was born in Britain, not Ireland. His parents were wealthy, and not all that religious. Patrick's father was a church deacon, but many speculate Patrick's father took the position for tax reasons.

Irish raiders attacked Patrick's family estate when he was 16 years old, kidnapped Patrick, and held him in captivity in Ireland for six years. During that time, Patrick worked as a shepherd, and turned to religion for solace. Many believe this is when Patrick began to dream of converting the Irish people to Christianity.

After six years in captivity, Patrick escaped from his captors, walking 200 miles to the Irish Coast. He returned to Britain, and guided by the voices of angels, began a 15 year study of religious training. Patrick then returned to Ireland to minister Christians, and convert others who practiced nature based religions.

Patrick chose to leverage his familiarity with Irish culture and customs to introduce Christianity. He used bonfires to celebrate Easter, borrowing from the existing customs already rooted in Ireland. The sun, another nature based symbol, was incorporated into the Christian cross.

Although much of what we know about St. Patrick is more myth than reality, the stories are fun, and reflect Ireland's long history of song and lore. ■

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