



Michael D. Pipa

Shareholder

Email: mdp@saxtonstump.com

Phone: [\(717\) 216-5507](tel:(717)216-5507)

Services and Industries

- Healthcare
- Intellectual Property Litigation
- Litigation
- Senior Care
- Healthcare Litigation

Education

George Washington University Law School, J.D., *cum laude*, 1988

Lafayette College, B.A. in Engineering, *cum laude*, 1983

Admissions

Pennsylvania

United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania

United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania

Michael Pipa is a trial lawyer with more than 30 years of experience in the courtroom trying civil cases throughout Pennsylvania with a unique focus in medical professional liability defense. Mike represents individuals who have

been sued for medical malpractice and over the course of his career has achieved verdicts in favor of physicians, physician extenders, nurses, practice groups, and hospitals. He practices out of the firm's Harrisburg office, allowing him to represent clients across most of Pennsylvania, including county courts in the central regions of the state and federal courts in the Western and Middle districts. Mike and his team utilize advances in digital technology at trial, including computer simulations, animations, medical illustrations, and graphics, to simplify complex medical concepts for the jurors. He has been recognized in the area of medical malpractice in Best Lawyers in America® since 2024.

Current Healthcare Litigation Practice

In his practice, he handles a span of complex medical issues, including cases that involve significant birth and neurologic injuries, adverse surgical outcomes, and alleged errors in medication and diagnosis. Mike's goal is to ensure that clients and their practices can thrive with minimal interruption in the new healthcare landscape. Additionally, he handles each case strategically and takes the necessary time to learn and match their unique professional and legal interests to the individual case circumstances. When justified, Mike uses creative approaches beyond trial, including mediation and binding arbitration. He also works closely with the firm's risk mitigation, quality improvement, and crisis management teams to help clients reduce legal risk and avoid costly litigation.

Professional Experience

Early in his career, Mike joined the Technical Marketing program of General Electric's Motor Business Group and worked at plants near Nashville, TN, and in Fort Wayne, IN. He later earned his law degree, with honors, from the George Washington University School of Law, where he served as a member of the *George Washington Law Review*. After graduation, Mike worked for a year in Washington, D.C., with the government contracting firm McKenna & Cuneo, within blocks of the White House. Mike then returned to his native state of Pennsylvania to practice with a local firm.

Mike served for a time as the Director of Operations of Real Alternatives, a non-profit company administering a statewide program of support for pregnant mothers and their babies. He then served as co-chair of the medical malpractice practice group in the Harrisburg office of a regional defense firm before joining the group that became the founding members of Saxton & Stump.

Community Involvement in Harrisburg, PA

Mike actively supports many local non-profit organizations including the Bethesda Mission and has served on the Parish Council and Board of Education at the Holy Name of Jesus Church in Harrisburg. For many years he coached youth football, boys' baseball and soccer, and boys' and girls' basketball. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus, a member of the Board of Governors of the St. Thomas More Society of Central Pennsylvania, and a member of Legatus, Ambassadors for Christ in the workplace.

Pennsylvania Native

Mike is a native of Elysburg, PA, home of Knoebel's Amusement Park, and a graduate of Our Lady of Lourdes High School in Shamokin, PA, where anthracite coal was mined for 134 years at the Glen Burn Colliery. He earned an

Engineering Degree, with honors, from Lafayette College, where he played football and JV basketball. Mike and his wife Ann Marie, a high school classmate and former RN at the Hershey Medical Center, raised their eight children locally and are now proud grandparents of twelve.

Professional Affiliations

- Healthcare Professionals Association of Pennsylvania
- Pennsylvania Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- Dauphin County Bar Association

Recent Defense Verdicts

- Successful defense of a midwife in a case involving the death of twins in utero at 26 weeks of gestation in a high-risk pregnancy. The Saxton & Stump team developed a computer animation that helped Mike explain that the outcome was unpredictable, unpreventable, and not related to the high-risk condition. The Dauphin County jury's defense verdict reflected its focus on the medical evidence rather than emotion.
- Defense verdict in Cumberland County in favor of a gynecologist who allegedly failed to diagnose cancer in a patient who reported a lump. The gynecologist assessed the lump as normal tissue changes after menopause. A biopsy by a different physician a year later revealed extensive cancer. The defense team used anatomical exhibits and a leading vulvar cancer expert to explain that the lump and the cancer were two different conditions.
- Successful defense of an anesthesiologist in Dauphin County, where the patient suffered progressive pain and weakness after an epidural steroid injection for back pain. The plaintiff underwent an operation a week later to relieve pressure on the spinal cord, but was left with permanent loss of function. Jurors understood, based on the timing of injury, that it was not related to the injection.
- Verdict in favor of a surgeon in a case of a bowel perforation after abdominal surgery. Mike presented testimony from an expert who traveled from Harvard to Clearfield County to support our client.
- Defense verdict for a family physician in a case of alleged failure to order an exercise stress test after the patient experienced lung pain while running. He was diagnosed with musculoskeletal pain after an EKG, lung spirometry and chest x-ray, but later suffered a fatal heart attack. The Saxton & Stump team produced an animation of an arterial plaque rupture that Mike used to convince jurors that the fatal rupture of a non-occlusive lesion would not have been detected by an exercise stress test.
- Defense verdict for a rheumatologist who allegedly overprescribed medication for back pain and fibromyalgia. The patient died in her sleep and the postmortem blood toxicology revealed high levels of opioids after the physician had steadily increased the combinations and dosages of opioids over many years of treatment. To avoid potential juror bias given the "opioid crises" publicity and numerous prosecutions by the Pennsylvania Attorney General, the case was strategically resolved via binding arbitration.
- Defense verdict in favor of a gynecologist who injured a ureter during a hysterectomy which caused an inner ear infection, along with the combination of antibiotics, that led to balance difficulties. The trial team utilized a video of a laparoscopic hysterectomy and spliced clips of the Plaintiff's deposition testimony to show she could pick up her cup and drink without looking, which countered claims she could no longer shop because objects on the grocery store shelves were constantly "spinning."
- Defense verdict for an otolaryngologist who performed a tonsillectomy on an adult patient. During the

tonsillectomy, the doctor felt it necessary to also remove the uvula. The Plaintiff alleged the uvulectomy was performed negligently, and without consent, resulting in permanent swallowing difficulties.

- Defense verdict in favor of an obstetrician alleged to have delayed a c-section delivery in the face of concerning fetal heart tones and the abnormal presence of the baby's hand in the birth canal. Compartment syndrome was diagnosed shortly after birth and an extensive fasciotomy was performed. To help the jury understand how compartment syndrome develops, Mike retained an expert from UPenn who performed the world's first pediatric hand transplant.
- Defense verdict in favor of an internal medicine doctor whose elderly patient suffered bilateral Achilles Tendon ruptures that caused permanent decreased mobility, including an inability to attend annual Naval submarine reunions. The injuries occurred after prescription of an antibiotic, which carried an FDA Black Box warning of tendon ruptures for elderly patients.
- Defense verdict in favor of a general surgeon alleged to have negligently transected a major hepatic duct during a laparoscopic cholecystectomy. Mike retained an expert from the Cleveland Clinic who used the actual images from the intraoperative cholangiogram to explain how and why the Plaintiffs' theory was wrong.

Recognitions

- Best Lawyers in America, Medical Malpractice Law – Defendants, 2024-2027