

**Guzman v Drayton**

2021 NY Slip Op 30055(U)

January 7, 2021

Supreme Court, Kings County

Docket Number: 504961/2015

Judge: Richard Velasquez

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This opinion is uncorrected and not selected for official publication.

At an IAS Term, Part 66 of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, held in and for the County of Kings, at the Courthouse, at 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, New York, on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of JANUARY, 2021

P R E S E N T:  
HON. RICHARD VELASQUEZ, Justice.

-----X  
MANUEL ROJAS GUZMAN,

Plaintiff,

-against-

Index No.: 504961/2015  
Decision and Order

CHARLITA A. DRAYTON.

Defendants,

-----X

The following papers NYSCEF Doc #'s 19 to 56 read on this motion:

<u>Papers</u>	<u>NYSCEF DOC NO.'s</u>
Notice of Motion/Order to Show Cause Affidavits (Affirmations) Annexed_____	19-36
Opposing Affidavits (Affirmations)_____	42-51
Reply Affidavit (Affirmation) _____	53-55
Memorandum of Law_____	37; 56

After having heard Oral Argument on JANUARY 7, 2020 and upon review of the foregoing submissions herein the court finds as follows:

Defendant moves pursuant to CPLR 3212 for an order granting defendant summary judgment and dismissing the Complaint of plaintiff, contending plaintiff fails to meet the serious injury threshold requirement mandated by Insurance Law § 5102 (a). (MS#2). Plaintiff opposes the same.

### BACKGROUND/FACTS

This action arises from a motor vehicle accident on February 14, 2014. It is alleged that plaintiffs' vehicle was struck in the rear by a motor vehicle operated by defendant.

### ANALYSIS

It is well established that a moving party for summary judgment must make a prima facie showing of entitlement as a matter of law, offering sufficient evidence to demonstrate the absence of any material issue of fact. *Winegrad v. New York Univ. Med. Center*, 64 NY2d 851, 853 (1985). Once there is a prima facie showing, the burden shifts to the party opposing the motion for summary judgment to produce evidentiary proof in admissible form to establish material issues of fact, which require a trial of the action. *Zuckerman v. City of New York*, 49 NY2d 557 (1980); *Alvarez v. Prospect Hosp.*, 68 NY2d 320 (1986). However, where the moving party fails to make a prima facie showing, the motion must be denied regardless of the sufficiency of the opposing party's papers.

A motion for summary judgment will be granted "if, upon all the papers and proof submitted, the cause of action or defense shall be established sufficiently to warrant the court as a matter of law in directing the judgment in favor of any party". *CPLR* §3212 (b). The "motion shall be denied if any party shall show facts sufficient to require a trial of any issue of fact." *Id.* The proponent of a motion for summary judgment carries the initial burden of production of evidence as well as the burden of persuasion. The moving party must tender sufficient evidence to show the absence of any material issue of fact and the right to judgment as a matter of law. (*Zuckerman v. City of New York*, 49 NY2d

557 [1990].) Once this burden is met, the burden shifts to the opposing party to submit proof in admissible form sufficient to create a question of fact requiring a trial (*Kosson v. Algaze*, 84 NY2d 1019 [1995] ).

It is well settled, in a soft tissue injury case, a plaintiff alleging a “serious injury”, must provide objective medical evidence of a “serious injury” within the meaning of the Insurance Law § 5102(d). A defendant seeking summary judgment on the grounds that plaintiff’s injury does not meet the threshold, the defendant must show that there is no question of fact that there is no loss of range of motion.

In the present case, defendants fail to show that there is no “serious injury” as a matter of law because the evaluating doctors find loss in range of motion in plaintiffs as well as differing ranges of motion from the evaluating doctors. This is similar to the situation in *Knokhinov v. Murray*, 27 Misc.3d 1211(A), 2010 WL 1542529 (N.Y.Sup.), where the evaluating doctors found differing normative values. In *Knokhinov*, the court denied summary judgment because when the findings reported by one doctor are assessed by application of the standard of “normal” stated by the other doctors, the reports present “contradictory proof”. *Id. See also Dettori v. Molzon*, 306 AD2d 308, 309 [2d Dept 2003]. As Judge Battaglia noted in *Knokhinov supra.*, in the Second Department, measuring a plaintiff’s range of motion and comparing it to a normal range of motion has become the linchpin of determining if a soft tissue injury is a “serious injury.” Therefore, in a case such as this where the ranges of motion observed by one of the doctors is less than the range of motion sworn to by another of the doctors, there are issues of fact. As such, defendants motion for summary judgment on serious injury threshold is hereby denied.

Accordingly, Defendant motion for summary judgment on serious injury threshold is hereby denied, for the reasons stated above. (MS#2)

This constitutes the Decision/Order of the court.

Dated: Brooklyn, New York  
JANUARY 7, 2021

ENTER FORTHWITH:

  
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HON. RICHARD VELASQUEZ