

Bashing between burgers

SUE HEWITT

A SICKENING, unprovoked attack on a man in a McDonald's outlet caught on CCTV shows customers walking over pools of his blood to order burgers.

And within minutes of the bashing at the counter, staff returned to the cash register at the Noble Park venue.

The footage shows a brief but savage attack on tradesman Peter — who does not want his surname used — at the counter.

The assailant wielded a long, thick marble pole and hit the 44-year-old from behind.

His lawyer, Lee Flanagan of Arnold Thomas & Becker, said the attack could have been prevented if security guards had been on duty.

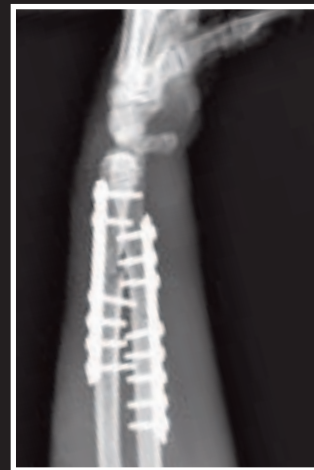
"It happened in a family restaurant, it happened inside, it happened at McDonald's; it could have been prevented," he said.

Mr Flanagan said his client suffered head injuries, headaches, dizziness, shock and mental and psychological reactions. He was off work from December 3, when the attack happened, to January 14.

He will launch legal action against McDonald's tomorrow, seeking unspecified aggravated damages.

The offender, Jason Joseph, was sentenced on Friday to a 12-month intensive corrections order for the assault, and Magistrate Donna Bakos said if he had pleaded not guilty she would have sentenced him to 18 months' jail.

Peter said the violence was sparked by an argument over queue jumping when he was in line at the McDonald's about 10pm.



Koala cure: Clockwise from left, Catherine the koala after surgery; an X-ray of the badly broken arm; baby Arnold's paw and Healesville Sanctuary staff perform surgery.

Pictures: ROB LEESON



Baby on board

STAFF at Healesville Sanctuary found more than they were looking for when they X-rayed a koala injured after being hit by a car.

As well as identifying a badly broken left arm, the X-ray also uncovered a four-month-old joey still being suckled by its mother.

"We often do X-rays and you can get a shock," sanctuary veterinarian Kathryn Stalder said.

"It's a pleasant surprise,

JOHN DAGGE

but it certainly heightens the anxiety regarding the treatment and just making sure mother and baby survive."

Catherine, as the koala has been named, was found injured on the side of a road on the Mornington Peninsula. She was taken to the sanctuary by local wildlife carer Jennie Bryant.

"She was in a bad way," Ms Bryant said. "We could feel a

break in her arm, but we didn't realise she had a joey."

On Wednesday, Catherine had two metal plates and 13 screws inserted into her arm in a three-hour operation carried out by a team of veterinarians from the sanctuary and the Melbourne Veterinary Specialist Centre.

Joey Arnold stayed in his mother's pouch.

Carers are confident Catherine will make it back into the wild.



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