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## WOMAN MAY AVOID TRIAL IN '97 SLASHING ATTORNEY SAYS CLIENT HAS BRAIN DAMAGE

**Author(s):** The Record PAULO LIMA, Staff Writer

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The attorney for a woman charged in a 1997 slashing said Monday that his client cannot stand trial because she suffered brain damage in a car accident 2 1/2 years after the alleged crime. [REDACTED], 25, is charged as an accomplice in the Nov. 18, 1997, attack on [REDACTED] in Edgewater. [REDACTED], her older sister [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]'s boyfriend, Edmund [REDACTED], are accused of carrying out the attack to get back at [REDACTED], who [REDACTED] ex-girlfriend.

[REDACTED] and Ko allegedly held Kim down while [REDACTED] [REDACTED] slashed the young woman with a knife. Kim needed more than 100 stitches and has undergone two laser surgeries to repair the damage.

[REDACTED], scion of a Korean apparel empire, was convicted last year of murdering a Columbia Law School student in her Manhattan apartment. He is currently serving sentence of 25 years to life in a New York prison.

The [REDACTED] sisters appeared in Superior Court in Hackensack on Monday, where [REDACTED] attorney, **Michael Beatrice**, raised the issue of his client's health.

"She has suffered a very severe brain injury and she cannot understand these very serious charges that could send her to prison for 85 percent of 10 years," Beatrice told Judge John A. Conte.

"I am telling you I'm having difficulty communicating with her in a way that I can prepare a defense."

Beatrice's argument is different from an insanity defense: He wasn't arguing that his client didn't know what she was doing at the time of the alleged crime; rather, he said, [REDACTED] did not take part in the attack on [REDACTED].

The younger [REDACTED] stood silently beside Beatrice in court, wiping away tears as a Korean interpreter translated the proceedings for her.

[REDACTED] was a passenger in a van that was involved in an accident on Route 9W in Englewood Cliffs in February, Beatrice said. A neuropsychologist evaluated her and said she has "moderate to severe" brain damage, he said.

"This is a treating physician, not just a forensic doctor hired by me," Beatrice said.

On Monday, Beatrice asked Conte to either accept that doctor's opinion or appoint an independent physician to evaluate his client.

Assistant Bergen County Prosecutor Liliana Silebi said she wants to hear from a state-appointed expert on the issue of [REDACTED] fitness for trial.

"Because she was in a car accident, they're claiming all of these disabilities when there's no medical corroboration," Silebi said.

Conte adjourned the case until Feb. 26, when he will decide whether to appoint an independent expert or allow a doctor appointed by the prosecution to evaluate [REDACTED].

Staff Writer Paulo Lima's e-mail address is [lima\(at\)northjersey.com](mailto:lima(at)northjersey.com)

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