



What To Do If You Have Been Injured In An Accident

By Robert S. Duxstad

Persons involved in an accident who have suffered injuries should protect themselves and their families by taking certain actions. Immediately after an accident, be sure to call the police, and obtain the name, address and license number of the other drivers. You should also obtain the names, addresses and telephone numbers of any witnesses to the accident. Follow up by making sure an accident report is properly filed and obtain a copy. Take photographs of the vehicles and accident scene.

Seek medical treatment as soon as possible. Be sure to follow up with any recommended treatment and medical appointments. Keep a diary of your medical problems, document how you feel, what medications you take, your medical appointments, and the impact the injuries have on your ability to work.

Consult with an attorney as soon as you are able. Initial consultations in personal injury matters are free. An attorney can help ensure that a proper and timely investigation into the circumstances of the accident is made before evidence is lost or memories fade. It is important to talk to an attorney before giving any statements to insurance adjusters. Remember that insurance adjusters are looking for ways to minimize your claim, they are not necessarily trying to be fair to you or your family. Be cautious with a adjuster who wants hurry you into a settlement, or says that going to an attorney will not help you.

Frequently it takes weeks or months before one can know the full extent of one's injuries. A doctor's opinion on the long-term consequences of your injury may be needed to obtain fair compensation. An attorney's advice is useful to determine how much is reasonable compensation for past and future medical expenses, past and future wage losses, as well as past and future pain and suffering. An attorney can also help direct a person for appropriate additional treatment or second medical opinions.

For every injury or death claim, there is a limited period of time during which you must file your claim with the court. If a governmental entity is involved, notice of the claim must be made within 120 days of the injury. Certain actions based on insurance policies made within one year. In Wisconsin, the period for bringing an injury or death claim is usually three (3) years from the date of the accident, but there are some exceptions. The period to bring an action in other states may be less than three years. It is important to have an attorney's advice soon after the accident so an important date is not missed which would bar a claim from being made.



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