

What You Should Know If You Were Involved In An Auto Accident

Dear Friend,

If you have been involved in an auto accident, you will have some important decisions to make and there are some things you *absolutely* need to know.

It is not well recognized that one of the most stressful aspects of living in modern life is dealing with the problems that arise after an auto accident. And sometimes auto accident injuries are hidden and are seldom detected for months or even years.

Even worse, most auto accident victims are unaware of the damaging effects of these hidden injuries. As a result, they release their insurance company from any and all liability by settling their case before getting examined for hidden injuries.

That is a gigantic mistake.

Why? Many auto accident victims receive inappropriate care either from the hospital, medical doctor or physical therapy clinic they entrust. They believed that “it’s not that bad”, “it will get better”, or “it will go away”. Subsequently, while the underlying damage is still “hidden” or covered up with medications, the insurance company convinces them to settle and close their case.

Don’t let this happen to you. The results of the inappropriate type of treatment can lead to lifelong chronic problems as you get older. This can include chronic pain, headaches, muscle and joint stiffness, fatigue, loss of range of motion, anxiety, and problems like arthritis. ***“Nothing is more important than your health, especially when you start to lose it”.***

MOST commonly thought about priorities:

Most people who suffer from auto accidents initially have one thing on their mind... their automobile! “Who is going to fix my car?” “What will I drive in the mean time?” “Will my insurance rates go up now that I am reporting an accident?” “Who is going to pay for it???”

LEAST commonly thought about priorities:

“Am I really all right?” “Do I have any injuries... even minor ones?” “How can I be sure?” “How can medication cure my problem?” “Who is *really* the most qualified to diagnose and treat me if necessary?”

Everybody knows that auto accidents are a significant inconvenience and a major hassle. However, sometimes the connection is not made that since the accident, you may not be feeling your “normal” self. You may be experiencing obvious pains and symptoms like muscle stiffness, spasms, neck and back pain, headaches, numbness and tingling, anxiety, fatigue, and other difficulties like not sleeping well. And even though you may feel they are minor, if left untreated, they can become a major issue down the road.

Or, you may be injured and not notice them at all. You may be experiencing subtle symptoms after some time after the accident such as light headedness, difficulty in concentration, difficulty sleeping, irritability, memory loss, fatigue, dizziness, or mild headaches, which can come and go, and most times you may not connect them to the accident. This is very common. These subtle and underlying symptoms can go undetected for months or even years, and if left untreated, can lead to chronic issues later in life.

Did you know that auto accidents can frequently cause post-traumatic spinal osteoarthritis?

Osteoarthritis can ruin your posture and health, and affect your ability to perform the physical activities you like to enjoy as you get older. Osteoarthritis can cause popping noises in your neck and joints, and the discs in your spine can break down (a condition called spinal degeneration) and create scar tissue formation, leading to chronic stiffness and the inability to move properly. This can lead to chronic pain, headaches, and a myriad of other health issues.

How are these hidden injuries detected? If you have been in an auto accident, you need a doctor that is trained in the functional bio-mechanics of the human body. That means that he or she can perform special orthopedic and neurological tests as well as other functional tests that can assess soft tissue damage, muscle strength, range of motion, and joint and nerve function. In addition, understanding the phases of functional soft-tissue healing as in the case of whiplash to insure proper healing is key. As an example, in *most* cases, depending on the severity, wearing a neck collar for a prolonged period can cause permanent scar tissue formation and improper healing, and can be the *worst* thing you can do! Unfortunately, most doctors are not well trained in the detection and proper treatment of these types of injuries.

My name is Dr. John D. Barrick. I am a Doctor of Chiropractic and a neuromusculoskeletal specialist and have been specializing in the treatment of auto accident victims and work-related injuries for over 20 years. I have had extensive training, and continue on an ongoing basis, to keep current with the latest research, technologies and methodologies relating to “whiplash” injuries and other musculoskeletal and soft tissue injuries.

I am also certified and use the DynaROM testing system that measures and proves soft-tissue injury to the spine. The tests are performed prior to treatment to get a baseline, and also during, and after treatment to document if the injuries have healed 100%. There is no other method that exists to prove soft-tissue injury other than the DynaROM, and it is accepted by the AMA for the Guides of Permanent Impairment.

I have treated literally hundreds of auto accident victims just like you with tremendous results. My patients receive the proper treatment plan which is critical to their future health, as well as a support system to help with as many stressful details as possible.

Furthermore, we are trained in handling the confusing paperwork that needs to be filled out to make sure that your rights are protected and your injuries are properly documented for legal purposes. We are expert at report writing and Impairment Ratings if necessary, to insure legal compensation if working with an attorney and insurance company if appropriate.

If you have been in an auto accident recently, you will have some important decisions to make that may impact you for the rest of your life. Here are some things to consider:

Q: Should I see an attorney before I see Dr. Barrick?

A: It is important to get checked out by the doctor first. This way the findings from your exam will allow you the information you need in order to decide if an attorney is necessary.

Q: What if my car sustained only minor damage?

A: Documented studies done by Charles Carroll, M.D., Paul McAtee, M.D., and Lee Riley, M.D. revealed that: “The amount of damage to the automobile bears little relation to the force applied to the cervical spine (neck) or the occupants.” In other words, the damage to the passengers is not necessarily directly related to the damage to the vehicle. This is because the newer vehicles absorb the impact, placing the damaging forces into the neck and backs of occupants of the vehicle.

Q: If I need treatment for this injury, do I have to pay for it myself?

A: Only in very rare circumstances does the patient pay for their care. Most car insurance policies have what is called medical pay, or “Med Pay” for short. This is medical coverage that you have been paying for with your premium since you have had insurance. This means that your medical bills will be paid at 100% up to a certain limit depending on your policy. Our billing administrator can assist you in obtaining this information. Using your medical pay will not raise your rates or affect your insurance in any way.

In some cases, if there is no insurance to bill, we will accept an attorney lien. Basically, this means that we get paid when your case settles. For more information, please feel free to call us and we will be happy to explain it to you in further detail.

Q: The Insurance Company keeps calling to settle. What should I do?

A: Please, for your own good, do not sign or settle until we evaluate you for any obvious or hidden injury. If you settle before your injury is fully resolved or even revealed, you are completely on your own. If, after you have been examined, the insurance carrier has questions about your injury, we will provide them with the results of the examination and furnish them any necessary reports.

Q: I have already been to the hospital and my medical doctor. Do I really need to see Dr. Barrick?

A: You need a doctor that specializes in the treatment and diagnosis of auto accident injuries. Usually hospitals will x-ray, check vital signs etc., and then release the patient with pain relief medication. Their job is to address mostly life or death situations or emergency crisis care, and not to detect underlying musculoskeletal injuries that may become chronic. Also, most family practitioners are not adequately

trained in detecting these kinds of injuries, and will recommend the same type treatment. Most injuries are mechanical trauma, and soft-tissue injuries do not appear on conventional x-rays. These injuries can later become permanent and be very debilitating if not treated properly.

If you were given medication as a treatment, please understand that medication will not correct structural or soft tissue damage, and does not facilitate healing. It only treats the *symptoms* of pain, muscle spasm, and inflammation. If these types of injuries go untreated, they can heal incorrectly with abnormal scar tissue formation, and can result in a permanent condition years later. At our office we offer special therapies designed to successfully treat these injuries without drugs or surgery.

Q: Does this care hurt?

A: Absolutely not. The care is very gentle and quite soothing. Our patients look forward to the relief they get from our treatment and the results they achieve.

Q: Is our care safe?

A: Yes, extremely, and we take pride in our care. We assist the body to heal itself naturally by restoring normal movement to insure proper healing of soft-tissues and joints without negative side effects, unlike many medications. Dr. Barrick gets results where others have failed to achieve resolution for these types of auto accident related injuries.

Q: Who is Dr. Barrick?

A: Dr. Barrick is a Board Certified Doctor of Chiropractic licensed in Maine. He is also a Certified Medical Examiner for the Department of Transportation (DOT/NRCME). He is trained in the treatment of neuromusculoskeletal injuries, rehabilitation, and specializes in the treatment and management of automobile injuries.

Q: Is Dr. Barrick the right Doctor for me?

A: Dr. Barrick will examine you first and determine the best treatment methods for your condition. If he believes other types of providers would help in your treatment, he will refer you as needed. He has a professional network of specialists including physical therapists, orthopedists, massage therapists, etc., who will work together for your benefit if a referral is necessary.

Throughout my years in practice, I have seen many patients who had been involved in auto accidents that ended up with chronic pain years later, because they were never given the proper advice for treatment. Also, many of these patients never received the proper medical payments or compensation for their injuries, because they were not evaluated properly. We at Barrick Family Chiropractic have developed a very successful “start-to-finish” diagnostic and treatment approach to address these types of injuries, and we would like to offer you these services in order to prevent a potential lifetime of chronic problems.

If you have been in an accident, please call our office to schedule an appointment to determine if there are any hidden injuries that need to be documented and addressed. If there were other occupants in the car with you during the accident, they may want to schedule an appointment for an evaluation as well. Please pass this information along to them.

Our office is conveniently located on route 236 in Kittery Maine, just 6 minutes from the Portsmouth, N.H. traffic circle. Evening hours are available.

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