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'Hidden' injuries after car accidents can lead to real costs down the road

If you've been in an automobile accident but don't feel any significant physical pain, it's still important to seek medical attention right away. That's because you may have a "hidden injury." In other words, you could have an injury without any immediate visible outward effects but for which you begin to experience symptoms over an extended period of time.

Hidden injuries can cause serious financial and non-financial costs that you may be entitled to recover. But if such an injury goes undetected for too long, it can make it difficult to secure all the compensation you deserve.

One of the biggest costs posed by hidden injuries is harm to your future health. For example, neck strain, also known as "whiplash," is a common injury that surfaces gradually in the days and weeks after a car crash. If you suffer whiplash and go without treatment for an extended period of time, it could impact your mobility and lead to chronic pain, worsening your quality of life.

Similarly, it's common to suffer spine injuries, such as a herniated disc, in a car crash. A herniated disc — meaning a disc that was compressed or ruptured from the force of a crash — will cause pain as you try and walk, bend over and lift. But such an injury often develops slowly, without the victim realizing they're injured until days later. Back pain is a sign of a herniated disc and ignoring it until it's really severe could make your recovery much more difficult and impede your daily functions.



Meanwhile, the force of a car crash, whether from the impact of the crash itself or from safety restraints like seatbelts and airbags, can cause internal injuries such as internal bleeding and concussions. Pain from such an injury may feel minor at the time, but this type of injury can result in long-term organ damage or issues with cognitive function. Even "soft tissue" injuries like strains, sprains and bruises caused by the sudden force of a car crash can worsen over time without proper treatment.

Another cost of hidden injuries is the financial cost. Diagnosing and treating accident-related injuries can become expensive over time. You

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LAW OFFICES

Donald E. Green, P.C.

330 Martin Luther King Blvd., Roxbury, MA 02119

Bus: (617) 442-0050 • Fax: (617) 442-2319

Employer held accountable for off-premises assault by employee

Being assaulted is a harrowing experience that can result in serious injury, emotional trauma and even death. Yet many assault victims think they have no recourse against anyone except the attacker, who may not be in a position to compensate them for their harm.

But a recent ruling from Ohio shows that this may not always be the case.

The case stems from a 2022 attack in the capital city of Columbus. The victim, Greg Coleman, was ordering from a food stand in front of Julep, a bar in the “Short North” section of the city, when one of the bar’s security guards approached him and asked him to leave the sidewalk. The two had words, and video footage showed a second security guard leaving his stool next to Julep’s entrance to confront Coleman as well.

As Coleman put his hands down and backed off to remove himself from the situation, the second security guard sucker punched him, causing Coleman to fall and crack his skull on the pavement.

The two guards continued to beat Coleman while

he was unconscious, and he later died from his injuries. They subsequently received life sentences for the crime.

Meanwhile, Coleman’s family sued Julep’s owners, seeking to hold them accountable in civil court, pointing out that the bar hired the guards without conducting background checks, failed to train them on handling conflict or use of force, and had no systems in place to monitor the behavior of security personnel.

The bar, however, argued that because the attack occurred off Julep’s premises, it couldn’t be held civilly responsible.

A Franklin County jury rejected that defense, handed down a \$27 million verdict, and held the bar 80 percent at fault.

If you or a loved one has been harmed in an assault, don’t assume the attacker is the only responsible party. Talk to an attorney who can investigate the situation and identify all parties that may share in the fault.

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When bike lane accidents occur, who’s at fault?

Bicycle lanes are intended to make busy streets less dangerous for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians. But depending on how they’re designed, they can actually become a safety hazard themselves.

For example, bike lanes may be too narrow, putting the cyclist too close to traffic and making it dangerous for cyclists to pass one another. Additionally, there’s the risk of a rider being “doored” by someone in a parked car who opens the door suddenly as a rider goes by. Meanwhile, bad signage can cause some bike lanes to end without warning, suddenly putting riders directly in traffic, creating a high risk of a crash.

Bike lanes can also create questions as to who’s at fault when a bike lane accident occurs.

In some cases, it may in fact be the rider themselves if they’re not operating their bicycle with reasonable care. But in a lot of cases, an injured cyclist may be able to hold a driver accountable for an accident if the driver fails to yield when and where required, is driving carelessly, or doesn’t look for oncoming cyclists before opening a car door.

Construction companies can also potentially be held responsible for a bike lane accident if they put up confusing detours or barriers that block bike lanes, resulting in accidents.

Finally, a cyclist may seek to hold the city or county responsible if it’s designed an unreasonably dangerous bike lane or failed to maintain a bike lane in a reasonably safe condition.

For example, the city of Chicago placed small, flexible-but-flimsy plastic posts in the road to delineate “protected” bike lanes. A few years ago, a cyclist pulled to the left to get around a city bus that was stopped in the bike lane. Right at the spot where he turned, a post had broken off its round base, which was still bolted to the road. The cyclist hit the base, flew over his handlebars and suffered severe injuries. He sought to hold the city responsible for failing to maintain a safe bike lane and obtained a very substantial recovery for his harm.

Injured in a bike lane accident? Call an attorney to discuss your case.

Family of heart-attack victim compensated for delayed evaluation

Emergency departments generally do their best to respond as quickly and competently as possible when confronted with a potential heart-attack victim. However, whether it's due to lack of training, insufficient staffing, fatigue or any number of reasons, they sometimes miss the signs and catastrophic results can occur.

Take a tragic recent case from Virginia that resulted in a significant recovery for the patient's family.

In that case, the patient reported to the ER with chest pain and shortness of breath that he suffered while raking leaves in his yard. As soon as he arrived, staff took his vitals and gave him an EKG before sending him back to the waiting area, where his symptoms continued.

The physician on duty reviewed the EKG quickly and noted abnormalities of the type that could indicate a heart attack, but did nothing to further evaluate the patient, such as sending him for catheterization or consulting with an interventional cardiologist.

While in the waiting room, the patient's condition deteriorated and he ultimately lost consciousness. Staff brought the patient into triage, but despite nearly an hour of efforts to resuscitate him, he died.

The patient's grieving family took the hospital to court, arguing that it was responsible for causing his wrongful death.



The hospital denied fault, but once the case reached the stage where each party had to designate their expert witnesses, the hospital agreed to a settlement. The specific terms were confidential, but clearly the hospital was concerned that a jury would find emergency personnel did not act with reasonable care in treating the patient.

Every case's outcome depends on its individual facts and circumstances. But if you believe a medical provider's negligence has caused you or a family member to suffer a negative medical outcome, call an attorney to discuss what steps you should take.

'Hidden' injuries after car accidents can lead to real costs down the road

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may need prescription medications or medical supplies, which cost money. You may also need services from a chiropractor or physical therapist. Additionally, as your injury worsens, you may need to take time off from work, resulting in loss of income and benefits. If you are unable to work over an extended period of time, it could be financially devastating.

You're obviously entitled to recover these additional costs, and you may also be able to obtain compensation for your pain, suffering and emotional distress. But putting off a diagnosis for too long may make it difficult for your attorney to properly value your case from the outset, creating the risk of a recovery that doesn't account for all the losses you ultimately incur.

Along these lines, perhaps the biggest cost of hidden injuries is potential harm to your case itself.

If you go to the doctor soon after the accident, even with minor pain, your pain gets documented. If your pain gets worse, this gets documented in follow-up visits. When your hidden injury is inevitably diagnosed, you have a paper trail leading up to that point. These medical records are key to establishing that the accident actually caused your harm. Waiting until your pain gets really bad before you see a doctor gives an insurance company the opportunity to claim you weren't really hurt or that whatever injury you suffered wasn't really caused by the crash.

The bottom line is that even if you feel basically fine after a car accident, you should seek medical care quickly while consulting with a personal injury attorney who can help guide you through the process. This is the best way to protect both your health and your case.

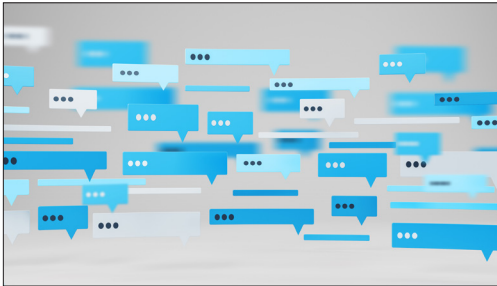


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Fax: (617) 442-2319

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Text messages can serve as evidence in injury cases



More than 20 billion text messages are sent on a daily basis, and they are an integral part of most people's communication. But beyond communicating with family, friends and business associates, text messages can serve as evidence in your injury case.

For one thing, texts can provide a picture of someone's communications surrounding the incident that resulted in an injury. In a lot of situations, that information could be helpful if you're seeking compensation for your harm.

For instance, if you get hurt by a driver who you believe was at fault, their texts may reveal whether they were using their phone around the time of the crash, which may suggest they were distracted.

Similarly, the other driver's texts to friends or family members after the crash may contain statements in which they admit responsibility.

On the other hand, your own texts could be used against you. Perhaps you felt shaken and confused

after an accident and texted something like, "I think I just caused an accident." You may have even assumed you were at fault when, in fact, the other driver caused the crash. In any event, texting something like that constitutes an admission of fault.

Similarly, let's say you texted an apology to the other driver after you've exchanged information just because you thought it was the right thing to do. Maybe you were just being polite and trying to head off potential conflict, but again, it could be interpreted as an admission that you caused the accident.

In either situation, you can be sure the driver and their insurance company will use these texts to shift the blame your way.

That's why, rather than texting about an accident after it occurs, you're much better off focusing on documenting the accident scene with photos, exchanging information with the other driver without small talk or follow-up texts, getting medical attention, and speaking to a personal injury attorney who can help safeguard your rights going forward.