

I Had An Accident Two Months Ago – Why Do My Back & Neck Still Hurt?

So, you had an accident. You slipped and fell, or maybe you were involved in a car collision. You thought you were okay, a little sore maybe, bumps and bruises – nothing serious. No broken bones. You noticed your back and neck started feeling tight, stiff and you couldn't move as freely as you could before the accident. You used a heating pad, took some pain relievers, and maybe saw your family doctor, just in case. But weeks have gone by, and you still hurt.

You've more than likely suffered a "soft-tissue injury." Soft tissues include the muscles, ligaments, tendons and nerves. If it's a muscle sprain or strain, then you're lucky because you'll probably get better in time. But, if you have a bulging or herniated disk, well, that will be with you permanently. That doesn't mean that it will always hurt, but, if you're reading this article, then you're probably one of the unfortunate people that are still plagued by the pain, which may even get worse.

When your neck and back hurts, it can be difficult and sometimes intolerable to perform everyday activities. Movements like turning your head, sitting, standing, bending or twisting can cause sharp or radiating pain, a dull ache, or annoying tingling, burning and numbness. These symptoms can be caused by herniated and bulging disks pressing on a nerve.

The spine consists of bones that are cushioned by disks comprised of a tough outer layer (annulus) and a soft, jelly-like inner layer (nucleus). These disks act as shock absorbers, protecting the spine and nerves from the stress of everyday movements as well as strenuous work such as heavy lifting. When a disk bulges, it protrudes from between the disks. When a disk herniates, a tear in the annulus allows the jelly-like nucleus to push into the spinal canal.

Herniated and bulging disks can cause injury or damage to nerve roots that run off of the spinal cord. You may have radiculopathy if the herniated or bulging disk puts pressure on a spinal nerve. Radiculopathy is a term to specifically describe pain, numbness, tingling or weakness in the neck, back, legs or arms, depending on where the disk is located, caused by damage to a nerve root. This pain will cause limitation of movement, restricting activity to such a degree that you may be considered partially and permanently disabled as a result.

If you are complaining of the above symptoms, your doctor will probably send you for an MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging). An MRI is a diagnostic test that will show injury to the soft tissue, unlike an x-ray, which focuses on bone. Radiculopathy is often diagnosed by another diagnostic test called an EMG (Electromyography).

When you're hurt in an accident, you never know whether your injuries will get better or be permanent. Lack of treatment or testing will give the adverse insurance carrier an opportunity to claim your injuries are not accident-related or serious. The insurance carrier may offer to pay very little or "nuisance money" to settle your insurance claim, or may refuse to make any payment at all. Protect your self and any potential claim you may have – seek immediate medical treatment and call an accident attorney right away for a consultation.

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