

# I Was In A Motor Vehicle Collision - What Should I Do?

A motor vehicle collision can be a frightening experience with potentially devastating consequences. By their very nature car accidents are unplanned events, often leaving those involved unprepared to deal with the aftermath. It is important to know what to do following a collision.

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## Receive Medical Attention

The most important thing is to make sure you receive prompt and proper medical attention.

Go to the hospital for a checkup and see your family doctor as soon as possible after the accident. Report all symptoms to him or her. Continue with regular visits until you have recovered completely or as best as possible. Follow your doctor's advice and that of any other professionals you may be referred to.

If you do not have a family doctor, it is a good idea to get one. Typically it is best if you can be in the care of one primary health care professional who can oversee your health and coordinate your treatment. Your family doctor can refer you to appropriate specialists, receive and review their consultation reports and generally follow your progress.

Eventually the specific diagnosis and prognosis of your injuries should be obtained from a health care professional to help you value your claim and to assist you in receiving fair compensation for your injuries. A physician who has followed your progress consistently from the date of the collision may be in the best position to do so.

## Document The Collision

It is important to properly document the collision. Get names, addresses and phone numbers of all drivers, witnesses, police officers and emergency personnel involved. Obtain a copy of the police motor vehicle accident report.

Make detailed observations of the accident scene and the road conditions at the time of the collision. If possible, you should make written notes and take pictures if you have a camera handy.

## Report The Accident To ICBC

It is mandatory to report all motor vehicle accidents that occur in BC to ICBC. This is the case even when ICBC is not the insurer for the vehicles involved. There can be financial consequences limiting victims' rights to recovery if ICBC is not notified promptly. For this reason it is always important to report your collision to ICBC within the prescribed time limits.

You can report your collision by calling ICBC's dial-a-claim (604-520-8222 in the Lower Mainland and 1-800-910-4222 elsewhere in BC).

## Seek Free Legal Advice Promptly

Whether or not you wish to hire a lawyer, it is important to take advantage of the free consultations offered by many personal injury lawyers in BC. It is important to seek legal advice promptly, as there are various time limits that must be followed-- otherwise you may jeopardize your right to receive full and proper compensation for your injuries and losses. If you don't know where to turn for a free consultation, you may contact the author (Erik Magraken at 250-381-5353) and arrange for your free consultation.