

How you work with your doctor can make all the difference

After you've been injured in a car accident, you should seek all the medical care that you need. Immediately.

There are lots of good reasons for doing so: your own health and well-being are, of course, the most important. But your personal injury case also depends on it.

Neither the insurance company nor a jury will simply take your word for how injured you are. They will want to hear from your doctor. If you fail to seek the treatment that you need, your doctor will have no way to know that you've been injured—much less the extent of your injuries!

The severity of an injury is judged largely by its treatment. When you put off getting the medical care that your injury requires, the jury will be less likely to believe that you are actually injured to the extent that you say you are. They will think, "if you were so badly injured, you should have gone to the doctor." And you know what? They'll be right! Remember that if you want other people to take your injury seriously, you need to take it seriously, too. And that means seeking the medical attention that you need.

Deciding *where* to go to get medical treatment, and from whom, will ultimately be up to you. We do, however, have a few general words of advice:

- **Be cautious of any doctor who "specializes" in personal injury or car crash victims.** Insurance companies may have become suspicious of such doctors, and the jury is likely to be wary, as well.
- **Do not see the chiropractor whose name you got from a display stand in your lawyer's waiting room.** While it is appropriate for your lawyer to recommend a specialist, it is not appropriate, in our opinion, for a lawyer to send clients to the same chiropractor over and over. Even if it's a very good chiropractor, this starts to look like the lawyer and chiropractor have some kind of business deal arranged, and both jurors and insurance adjusters will rightly be suspicious of this.
- **Choose a doctor who is willing to listen to you.** This is true for every time you seek medical care, but it's especially important for personal injury cases. Some doctors hate personal injury claims, and will not testify for you. Once they hear you have been in an accident and have a lawyer, they will treat you as though you are making things up in order to get money. You won't get the care that you need from these doctors.

If you are concerned about the cost of getting proper medical care, remember that when you are in a car crash, in most cases your own insurance will pay all of your medical bills for a year after the crash, up to at least \$15,000. This is called "personal injury protection" (PIP).