

5 Things You
Need to Know **Before**
You're in a
Car Accident

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What will we cover?

- Will it ever happen to you?
- Auto accident myths
- What you need to know **BEFORE** it happens!!

It Won't Happen to Me!

- About **3,000,000** traffic-related injuries per year
- Every **10 seconds** someone is hurt in a car crash
- Nearly **37,000** die each year in automobile crashes
- Every **13 minutes** someone dies in a car crash
- About **1,300** Illinoisans die every year in crashes
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children from 4 to 14 years of age.
- 39% of occupants involved in fatal crashes were not wearing a seatbelt. An additional **9,167** deaths could have been prevented by the use of seatbelts.
- Alcohol involved in 39% of all car crash deaths
- 26% people have had accident in last 5 years
- If you're over 60, you are much more likely to be seriously injured in a crash

Sources: U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) database, personal communication, October 2004; Issues Related to Younger and Older Drivers; National Injury Prevention Foundation

What does this mean?

- You are VERY likely be in accident in the next few years
- Question: ***Why do you wear a seat belt if never going to be in an accident?***
- Are you assuming it will all be O.K.????

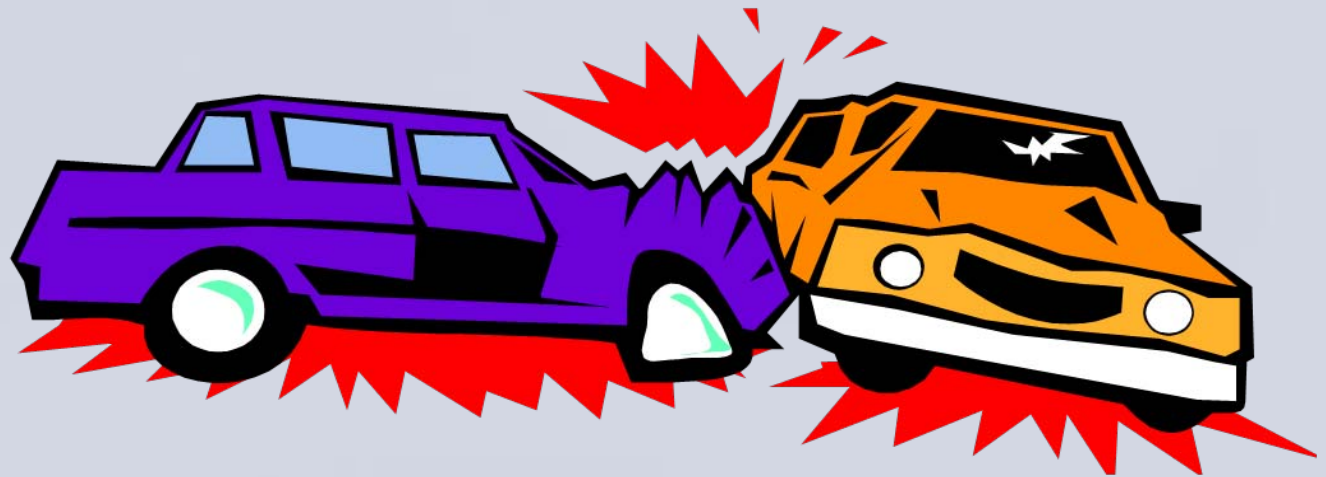
That's a myth!

Top Auto Accident Myths

1. The **Golden Rule** applies - everyone will treat me like I'd like to be treated.
2. Insurance companies will handle it fairly
3. If it DOES hurt now, it will always get better in a few days
4. If it doesn't hurt now, it won't hurt later
5. If I'm not bleeding, I'm not hurt
6. The police will get all the information
7. We don't need to get the police involved
8. Accidents only happen to bad drivers

What to do?

- Be prepared for it
- How? Remember, it's a . . .



C R A S H

C

- CALL for help
- Why?
 - Insurance companies usually require it
 - You may not appreciate damage
 - Potential of injuries
 - He said/she said
- Who?
 - Police, always!!!
 - Friend/Family
 - YOUR insurance company (within 24 hours preferably)
 - NOT the other party's insurance until investigation complete

C R A S H

R

- REQUEST medical attention
- If you concerned you are injured at all
- If you have any medical condition
- Even if “just shaken up”
- Why?

Ambulance Instructions

POST MVC INSTRUCTIONS

Instru
Note:
D W
A. K
w
B. C

A. Muscle soreness/stiffness may increase during the first 48

B. Contact your physician if symptoms worsen or new symptoms develop.

symptoms worsen or new symptoms develop.

C. L
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de

- Unusual weakness
- Severe headaches
- Repeated vomiting (more than 3 times)
- Convulsions or seizures
- Difficulty breathing

Witness _____
(Date) _____

WHITE: PATIENT COPY YELLOW: DEPARTMENT COPY.

Emergency Room Discharge Instructions

GOOD SAMARITAN DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

Your exam shows you have strained the muscles and ligaments in your neck. This injury is very common in car accidents; often there is a delay of several hours after the injury before the pain and stiffness appear. A strained neck may also result from sleeping in an awkward position, working overhead, or even using a keyboard. These strains usually improve greatly with proper treatment in 1-2 weeks. Treatment includes: * Rest may be needed for several days. Keep your neck in the neutral position over your body. Avoid pillows that push your head forward. If you use a pillow on your side, make sure your nose is lined up with the center of your body. A special neck pillow can be used for the first few days and then help with movement. Massage and other physical therapy can help reduce pain, inflammation, and spasm can be used to immobilize the neck. Do not expect that your neck injury will be very painful after 3 days of treatment or if the pain does not improve, return to the emergency room right away if you have difficulty breathing or if you develop numbness or weakness in your arms, hands or legs.

“This injury is very common in car accidents; often there is a delay of several hours after the injury before the pain and stiffness appear.”

C R A S H

R

- Why request medical attention?
 - Full symptoms may not appear until hours later
 - Prompt attention ensures best possible medical result
 - Insurance companies want prompt treatment for best coverage

C R A S H

A

- ASK for information
- Get license plates of EVERYONE who was in area (even partial plates numbers)
- Names, address, phone numbers of everyone (don't forget passengers)
- Do NOT assume police will get everyone's information (even if witnesses want to give it)
- TIP: Ask for each person's business card, insurance card

C R A S H

S

- SEE all damage to vehicles AND property
- Be a detective
- Look for:
 - Roadway, stoplights, video cameras
 - skids
 - vehicles – headlights, taillights
 - people
 - weather
- Photograph everything
 - camera phone?
 - Keep camera in car!
 - Wal-Mart is everywhere



C R A S H

H

- HOLD wrongdoers accountable
- Handle it yourself?
 - Most often
 - Never, ever, accept cash
- Lawyer?
 - Long-term, serious injuries
 - Inadequate offer
 - Good lawyers will give you honest advice on what's best for you

What to remember

C – R – A – S – H

Call for help

Request medical attention

Ask for information

See all damage

Hold wrongdoers accountable

Glove box contents

- Insurance card
- First aid kit
- Disposable camera
- ***Dixon Law Office Auto Accident Information Sheet***