



10 Things to Do and Not to Do Immediately After a Car Accident

Getting into a car accident is a scary experience. Fortunately, most accidents aren't too serious and all parties involved can walk away without any injuries. Unfortunately, some accidents are very serious, and even those that seem minor at first can cause delayed onset issues like whiplash. For this reason, it is important to know what to do—and what not to do—in the hours and days immediately following an accident.

Consider printing this report off and keeping it in your glovebox to refer to in the event of an accident. This can be very helpful since it is often difficult to quickly remember everything you need to do in the event of an accident.

Do Seek Medical Attention & Help Others

The first thing you should always do is make sure you and anyone else involved with the accident is okay. If you're injured, seek medical attention as quickly as possible. While the other steps in this guide are important, taking care of your medical needs, and those of others involved, is always the top priority.

Don't Let Witnesses Leave without Getting Their Information

Many accidents occur in busy traffic areas, which means there is likely going to be witnesses to the event. Anyone who stops to help after the accident is a potential witness, so you need to make sure you get their contact information. In most cases,

it won't be necessary to contact them, but it is best to leave that to your attorney to determine. Simply asking for the name and phone number of any witnesses on the scene of the accident can be very helpful to a personal injury lawsuit.

Do Call the Police

A police report is a key piece of evidence for any lawsuit. Despite this, many people are tempted to keep the police out of it when the accident seems minor. While this is understandable at first, it can cause a lot of problems down the road if you find that you've actually experienced an injury that you didn't notice at first. This is quite common for issues like whiplash, which can easily occur in a car accident.

Once the police have arrived at the scene and completed their work, request the police report number from the officer. They may have it immediately, or they will give you instructions on how to get it. You should also get the name and badge number of all officers who respond to the accident in case their testimony is needed in the future.

Don't Throw Anything Away

If you have bloody clothing, medical bill receipts, copies of police reports, insurance papers, or anything else that you were given during or after the accident, do not throw it away. An attorney can look through all these things and determine what, if anything, should be discarded.

Do Gather Evidence

If you aren't seriously injured at the scene of the accident, make sure you start gathering evidence that could be used in your case. If you have a camera phone, for example, take pictures of everything that seems even slightly relevant. This includes things like the damage to both cars, any skid marks on the roads, and more.

Don't Apologize or Admit Fault to Anyone

Many people are tempted to apologize after an accident, even if it really wasn't their fault. While this may seem natural, it can actually be used as evidence against you in court. While saying sorry doesn't necessarily mean your case is automatically lost, it really can't help the situation, so it is best to not say anything that could be understood as admitting guilt.

Do Keep Track of All Details

Keeping notes of everything related to the accident from the time it occurs until your case is completed can be very helpful. You can get a notepad to write down what you remember happening, any contact information from people on the scene, any days missed from work, costs related to medical bills, and much more. The more information you write down, the better the chances that there will be something useful for your attorney.

Don't Delay Getting an Estimate on Fixing Your Vehicle

As soon as you are able to, get an estimate from a reputable mechanic on how much damage your vehicle sustained. Don't get the vehicle fixed without first speaking to an attorney as they may want to get specific pictures of the damage first. In addition, you may be able to recover damages from the other person's insurance company.

Do Call an Attorney

One of the most important things you can do after an accident is contact an experienced personal injury attorney. An attorney can go over all the details of your accident with you, and help determine whether you have a good personal injury case on your hands or not. Ryan R. Cox & Associates, LLC offers a free consultation to discuss your case and doesn't collect any payment until after we

win your case. If needed, an attorney can come visit you at home, in your office, or in the hospital to get the process started.

Don't Accept a Settlement

Some insurance companies will attempt to settle a case before it has even begun. This is especially popular in more serious accidents. An insurance representative may even come to the hospital to offer you a settlement. While it may seem tempting at first, and the insurance company will make it sound like it is your best option, it is always a mistake to accept any type of settlement without speaking with an experienced injury attorney first.

If an insurance company is desperate enough to send someone out to try to settle with you right away, it may mean they know that your case is strong and they don't want to risk going to court. While settling with insurance companies is often a good option, you will almost certainly get significantly more money if you have an experienced attorney there to negotiate the settlement on your behalf.