

Top 10 Mistakes Made After A Car Accident

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In this Top Ten List, we have drawn upon our decades of experience in handling car accident cases to compile the most common mistakes made after an accident. We hope that this list can help you and your loved ones respond in the best manner possible after an accident, as well as help to avoid the difficulties that these mistakes can create. If you have been in a car accident, and have questions regarding a potential claim, or any of the mistakes listed below, please contact our firm for a free legal consultation.

1. Not Calling The Police

A police report is an objective record of what took place. It may end up being a vital piece of evidence during litigation to prove what really happened. It may also prevent the other driver or witnesses from giving false identifying information. When discussing the accident with the police or the other driver, you should never admit fault. You may initially believe that you contributed to the accident, but later learn that the other driver was at fault.



2. Not Exchanging Insurance Information

If you are in a car accident of any kind, regardless of how minor it may appear, you may want to keep going about your day, rather than dealing with the hassle of exchanging insurance information. Please do not fall into this easy trap. Even if you think that there was no damage and no one appears hurt, you do not



know what may develop later. You may wake up the next day and be in pain. Without this crucial information you may be out of luck, and not be able to collect for your injuries. It is always better to collect the information, and never use it, than to not have it when you need it. **Be sure to get the other driver's**

name, address, phone number, driver's license number, license plate number, insurance company, policy number, the make and model of the other vehicle, and the vehicle owner's information if it is different from the driver's information.

3. Not Seeking Timely Medical Treatment

After an accident it can be difficult to tell exactly what type of injuries you may have suffered. Often your body is in shock, and you may not even feel pain until several hours later or the next day. It is important to have a doctor properly assess you immediately after the accident or as soon as you begin to feel pain. Also, if your case results in litigation, then you will have a clear record of the injuries that were caused by the accident. This is better than trying to explain later why you waited so long to see a doctor, when you were in fact in pain and experiencing serious injuries.



4. Not Collecting Evidence

Experiencing an accident can be very overwhelming. While your immediate reaction may be to ensure that you and your family are safe, it is also important to contact the police and exchange insurance information. If you do not require immediate medical assistance, your next step should be to collect evidence.

Eyewitnesses may be key to proving that you are not at fault. Try to collect the names, addresses, and phone numbers of people who may have witnessed the accident. Also, **if you can do so safely, take pictures and/or videos of the scene and the vehicles.** You should capture not only the scene of the accident, but also the roadway, crosswalks, street signs, traffic signals, and debris from the accident.



5. Trusting The Insurance Company

After you are in an accident, you will likely receive a call from the other driver's insurance company. Insurance companies have comforting and catchy advertising campaigns, which may lead you to trust them. However, the truth is that they are a business, which means that the first thing they look out for is their bottom line. This might mean that they push for quick settlements or try



to find ways to avoid paying anything at all. They may also ask you to give a recorded statement in the hope that you will admit fault or contradict yourself. Please remember that you are under no obligation to give a recorded statement. These are a few of the many reasons why you need an attorney who will always lookout for and protect your interests.

6. Not Treating Serious Injuries

After an accident you may experience soreness or stiffness that you might assume will resolve without the need for medical assistance. However, there are important signs to lookout for, such as numbness, tingling, or radiating pain. These could be signs of a herniated disc or a damaged nerve, which are more serious injuries. Whatever your symptoms may be during the period of time that you are experiencing pain, you should **continue to follow up with your doctor**

until the pain is resolved. Trying to tough it out may only cause more strain or significant damage, and impact your ability to get full compensation for your injuries.



7. Waiting Too Long To Pursue A Claim

There is a limited amount of time to pursue a claim after an accident. Depending on the facts, you may need to take action fairly quickly. It is always

best to contact an attorney as soon as possible, so the attorney can ensure that your right to pursue a claim is properly protected.

8. Not Understanding Your Rights

Many people are unaware of the types of expenses and damages that they can seek compensation for after an accident. Not only can damages be claimed for property loss and medical bills, but damages can also be claimed for pain and suffering and lost wages. An attorney can help ensure that the insurance company does not cut any corners, and can negotiate with the insurance company if it threatens to cut off benefits or to not cover specific bills.



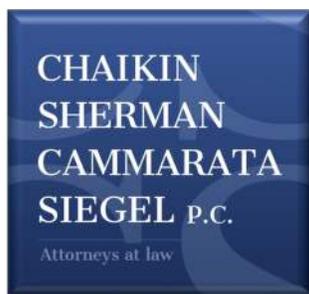
9. Settling Too Quickly

As mentioned previously, the insurance company's main priority is to protect its own interests. It is beneficial for the insurance company to settle claims quickly while spending the least amount of money. This method, however, is not beneficial for injured persons. It is never advisable to settle without knowing the full extent of your injuries. This is especially true for people who have suffered permanent and debilitating injuries. You must know the long-term physical and financial impact of your injuries in order to ensure that you will receive full compensation. Any settlement should adequately compensate you for the severity

of your injuries and should also take into consideration the fact that the injuries may be lifelong in some cases.

10. Not Contacting The Right Attorney

It is very common to have a family attorney, with whom you have worked with in the past. It may be someone who drafted a will or helped with a traffic or immigration matter. A personal injury matter, however, deals with a specific area of law that is best handled by a lawyer who has had success and experience with such issues. At Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata, and Siegel **we have decades of experience in helping our clients successfully** deal with insurance companies, negotiate settlements, litigate cases, and go to trial when necessary. Please visit our website to watch or read client testimonials, and to learn more about our experience directly from our clients themselves.



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