Hurt in an Accident? Your First 30 Days

What you do in the first few weeks after an injury affects both your recovery and any claim you may have. Here is a simple checklist.

Your health

- [ ] **Get checked, even if you feel okay.** Some injuries, like whiplash and concussion, show up hours or days later.
- [ ] **Tell your provider exactly how you were hurt** and every place that hurts, even if it seems minor.
- [ ] **Follow the treatment plan** and keep your appointments. If you must miss one, reschedule and tell your provider why.
- [ ] **Keep a simple pain journal:** how you feel each day and what you cannot do.

Your paperwork

- [ ] The police or incident report number
- [ ] The other driver's name, insurance and policy number
- [ ] Photos of the scene, vehicles and your injuries
- [ ] Names and phone numbers of witnesses
- [ ] Every bill, receipt, prescription and mileage to appointments
- [ ] Proof of missed work (pay stubs, a note from your employer)

Dealing with insurance

- [ ] **Report the crash to your own insurer.** Your policy may require you to cooperate with them.
- [ ] **Be careful with the other driver's insurer.** Before giving a recorded statement or signing anything, you may want advice about your rights.
- [ ] **Do not sign a release** until you know the full extent of your injuries. A release usually ends the claim for good.
- [ ] **Stay off social media** about the accident and your injuries.

CALIFORNIA DEADLINES

- **10 days:** report to the DMV (form SR-1) if anyone was injured or killed, or property damage to any one person was over $1,000 (Veh. Code § 16000)
- **6 months:** written claim if a city, county, state or transit agency was involved (Gov. Code § 911.2)
- **2 years:** most injury lawsuits (Code Civ. Proc. § 335.1)

Questions about your rights?

A free consultation can help you understand your options before you talk to an insurance company. B&D Law Group handles car, truck, motorcycle, rideshare, pedestrian, bicycle, dog bite and premises injury cases across California. Fee terms are explained in writing before you decide anything.

QUESTIONS? TALK TO US

(888) 977-2238 | Los Angeles office (310) 424-5252 | bdinjurylawgroup.com

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