

AUTOMOBILE TRAUMA - WHAT YOU MUST KNOW

Automobile accidents have become very common as more and more cars occupy our roads and those roads become more congested. The types of accidents that occur range from the seemingly innocent tap on your rear bumper from the car in back of you to accidents which can cost you your life.

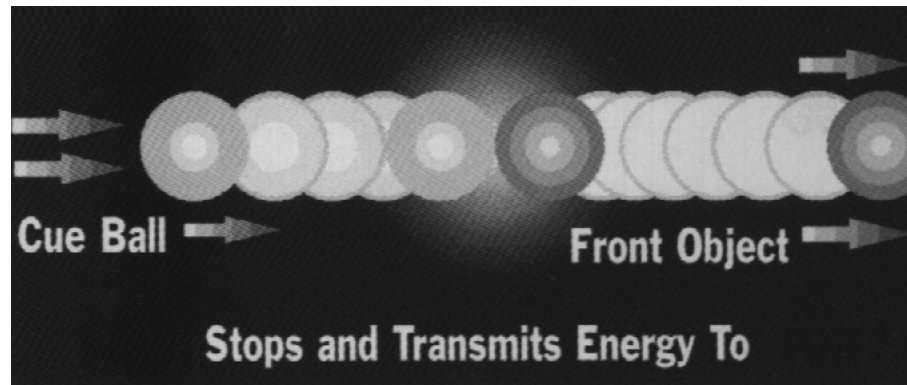
Recovering from an accident may range from just a few days to months depending on the extent of your injuries. Many people do often mistake stiffness that goes away a few days after an accident with not being injured. Often these same people suffer with pain and stiffness months to years later, only to blame it on the aging process, arthritis and other things.

Its a fact that:

- ◆ ***50 million Americans suffer from whiplash residuals.***
- ◆ ***25 million report their injuries.***
- ◆ ***10 million of that group seek medical attention.***
- ◆ ***Far too many Americans are unaware of the effects of low impact collisions¹.***

The Law of Conservation of Linear Momentum is responsible for most lower speed impact injuries to passengers of vehicles. Simply explained, when a

vehicle is struck by another vehicle, the passengers neck and shoulder receive a force 21/2 times the original force of the impact. This is similar to hitting the cue ball on a pool table into another ball (see example). The cue ball stops, while the other ball speeds away at 21/2 times the original speed of the ball that hit it.



The actual force a typical person experiences through their body can be considerable, even in a simple rear end collision with no damage to either vehicle. Interestingly, it is not uncommon to be injured worse when there is little damage to a vehicle than when there is considerable damage. This happens because a damaged vehicle will often absorb and dissipate the shock as the sheet metal bends. When you compare this example to an undamaged vehicle, which receives the same amount of force, the impact forces are transmitted to the passenger directly. This explains why a small damaged car may cause fewer injuries to an occupant than a large car which received little damage to its exterior. Safety belts may also worsen the injury to a persons neck. Air bags are also known to cause injury as well, although in a severe accident it may save your life.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE INJURED

Injuries to the spine may go unnoticed due to a decrease of the symptoms after the impact occurs. Most people do not realize that this is a traumatic injury to their back and neck and should be taken seriously. Those who do not see their symptoms go away are actually luckier, because they are more likely to seek medical care, rather than assuming the problem just went away on its own. These type of injuries will heal, although they are most likely to cause disability without proper intervention.

A safe rule to follow after any automobile injury is that if you are stiff or sore or experience any pain after an automobile accident, you have been injured. Why else would you be sore? Typically, someone injured in an auto accident feels stiffness, pain, light-headed and may feel headachy the day of the accident. It is common to feel more pain the following day due to your bodies own pain killers (endorphins) wearing off. Even if the stiffness and discomfort begins to go away, you need to report to your auto insurance carrier you were injured and you should immediately call your chiropractor to be evaluated.

All New Jersey residents who drive must purchase a coverage known as PIP which covers you in the event of an accident and you must report the injury immediately to your insurer for full coverage. Your automobile carrier becomes your primary insurance for the accident and your health insurer becomes the secondary carrier. If you are concerned about how this will affect your automobile insurance rates, you shouldn't be. Using this coverage does not affect your rates and is part of the NJ automobile insurance laws.

WHY SHOULD I SEE A CHIROPRACTOR?

When the spine is traumatized due to an automobile injury, muscles, nerve structures, ligaments and even the spinal discs may be torn due to the forces involved in the impact. While patients are told to ice the area, the concern becomes how to rehabilitate the region to maximum strength and minimize future problems to the damaged area. If you do not see a doctor and have appropriate care applied, you will empower the insurance carrier to deny treatment and you will allow for improper healing which can result in chronic headaches and other pains which often worsen with age. Soft Tissue Trauma is cumulative. A study done by researchers Vall and Karnagham² concluded that 25% of Motor vehicle victims develop chronic disability of some type.

When tissues heal, they heal with scar tissue which slowly over time contracts (similar to a cut on your finger which leaves a scar which contracts over time). This scarring effect is responsible for many of the chronic symptoms experienced by automobile trauma sufferers. Effective treatment consists of chiropractic adjustments (to mobilize the spine and maintain normal neurology), physiotherapy (heat, Ice, Microcurrent) during the acute inflammatory phase and Myofascial Release Technique to the healed tissue to minimize dysfunction due to scar tissue. Active rehabilitation (exercises) to the injured areas will also speed healing and is an integral part of effective chiropractic rehabilitation for an automobile accident.

IN SUMMARY

- ◆ If you are involved in an automobile accident and feel sore or stiff, this indicates you were injured.
- ◆ Immediately call your insurance company to let them know you were injured.
- ◆ Call your chiropractor and have yourself checked out as to the severity of the injury which may not be apparent unless checked by a qualified health care professional.
- ◆ These types of injuries do not go away and soft tissue trauma is cumulative. Having yourself checked out is your best protection.

References

1. Data compiled from the Center for Statistics and Analysis, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the National Safety Council, 1986 - 88.
2. Karnagham, L., Vall, J. Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neurology Vol 23, pgs. 179 - 182, 1987.

"Improving the Quality of Life One Spine at a Time"

For further information, call

Charschan Chiropractic and Sports Injury Associates

490 Georges Rd. No. Brunswick, NJ 08902

Main Office **(732) 846 - 6400**

1281 Raritan Rd. Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

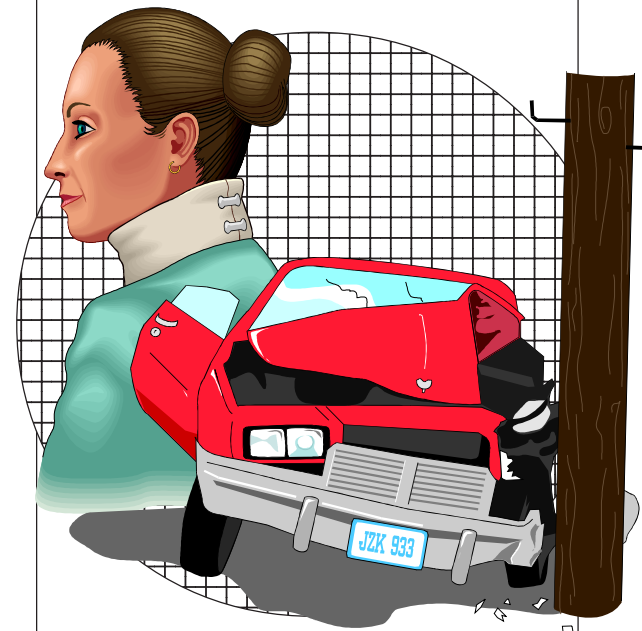
Home office **(732) 829 - 0009**

Dr. William Charschan, Director

<http://www.backfixer1.com>

Designed by William D. Charschan D.C., C.C.S.P. Copyright © 2006. All rights reserved.

Automobile Trauma What you



**must
know**