

HOW TO INCREASE YOUR RECOVERY AFTER AN ACCIDENT

If you get in an accident, what you do right away and during your recuperation affects the compensation you receive. Failing to take the right steps or keep track of important information can lower your recovery.

Here are key steps to take after an accident to help get the maximum you are entitled to obtain.

- Get witness information. An independent witness can be a big help, especially if there's a dispute over what happened. So be sure to obtain the name, address and phone number of all witnesses.
- Make notes of what happened. Include the time, place, weather and road conditions (for car accidents), and what occurred.
- Take photos. If you were in a car accident, photograph the accident scene and cars. All accident victims should photograph their injuries, as these help show a court or insurance company the injuries you suffered.
- Preserve evidence. If any physical evidence was involved in the accident, save it.
- Keep a record of medical expenses. Accident victims can recover money for medical expenses caused by the accident. So keep track of doctors' bills, hospital costs, drug bills, therapy costs, and all other medical costs related to your accident.
- Keep track of lost wages. Your lost income can be a large part of your accident recovery. So keep a record of wages lost due to the accident. If you have a history of overtime or bonuses, put that in your records.
- Keep a record of other ways the injury affects you. If the accident causes you to miss family events or give up things you normally did, keep track of this. If you have pain and similar problems, note this too. You may be able to recover money for your pain and suffering and lifestyle changes.
- Legal help. Having a lawyer represent you helps increase your recovery. Studies show accident victims who use a lawyer receive more money than those who don't.
- Act soon. The time right after an accident can be vital to your claim. The sooner you talk to a lawyer, the sooner an investigation can be made, evidence obtained and witnesses interviewed.
- Don't settle too fast. Many accident victims accept a quick settlement, but discovery later they have more medical bills and other losses. Once you settle, it is likely you will not be able to recover money for additional losses. So don't settle until you know all your damages.

These are just some ways to help make sure you get all you are entitled to receive after an accident. If you are in an accident, even a small mistake can reduce the amount you recover. Avoid problems by taking the rights steps.

