

## Why Documenting Injuries After a Car Accident Matters

### An experienced Palm Beach County lawyer can guide you through the legal process

A [car accident](#) is a stressful experience – physically, emotionally, and mentally. Whether you walked away feeling fine or were rushed to the hospital, one of the most important things you can do to strengthen your claim for compensation is document your injuries thoroughly. It may not be the first thing on your mind, but when it comes to protecting your health and your legal rights, documentation can make or break your claim.

At [The Law Offices of Casey D. Shomo, P.A.](#), we've helped countless car accident victims in Palm Beach Gardens and throughout Florida navigate the confusing and overwhelming aftermath of a crash. One thing we know for certain – the better your injuries are documented, the stronger your case will be.

### What does it mean to document injuries?

Documenting injuries means creating a clear, organized record of the harm you suffered from the accident. This includes everything from initial pain to long-term symptoms, treatments, and how the injuries have affected your day-to-day life.

You can think about it like a timeline – one that shows how the accident happened, what it did to your body, and what you've had to go through since. The more detailed and consistent your documentation, the harder it is for insurance companies to dispute your claim.

### Why documentation matters so much

Insurance companies don't just take your word for it when you file a personal injury claim. They look for proof – medical records, doctor's notes, photos, and other documentation that shows your injuries are real, serious, and connected to the crash.

Without strong documentation, it's easy for insurers to minimize your injuries or claim they were caused by something else. But when you've kept careful records, you give your attorney the tools they need to argue your case and maximize your compensation. Documentation can help show:

- The extent and severity of your injuries
- How the accident impacted your ability to work or enjoy life
- Your medical treatment and recovery process
- The pain and suffering you've endured

## **What you should do after the accident**

Even if your injuries initially seem minor, it's essential to start documenting as soon as possible. These early steps not only protect your health, but they also lay the foundation for a strong legal claim.

### **Seek medical attention right away.**

Your first step after any accident should be seeing a doctor. Even if you feel okay at the scene, adrenaline can mask pain, and some injuries, like concussions, soft tissue damage, or internal bleeding, may not appear for hours or even days.

Prompt medical attention creates a timestamped, professional record linking your injuries to the accident. Be sure to explain all your symptoms thoroughly, even minor ones, and ask for copies of your visit summary or test results.

Follow up with your primary care doctor or any specialists you're referred to and attend all scheduled appointments. These visits help establish the seriousness of your condition and show that you're actively treating your injuries.

### **Take photos of injuries.**

Photographic evidence is one of the most powerful forms of documentation. Take clear, high-quality pictures of your injuries as soon as possible, at the scene if you can, and at home afterward. Bruises, cuts, swelling, abrasions, and even visible stiffness or limited movement should all be recorded.

Continue taking photos throughout your recovery to show how the injury progressed over time. These visual records help paint a full picture for insurers, judges, or juries. Also, if possible, photograph any damage to your clothing, assistive devices (like slings or braces), or mobility aids you've had to use.

### **Keep a journal.**

Start a recovery journal as soon as you can. Each day, write down:

- How you feel physically (pain levels, headaches, stiffness, fatigue)
- Emotional symptoms (anxiety, depression, sleep issues)
- Activities you couldn't do (household chores, hobbies, exercise)
- Time missed from work, and how that affected you financially and emotionally

Over time, this becomes a powerful tool that reflects the full impact of the accident, not just physically, but emotionally and functionally. A journal can also help you remember details that fade with time, which is especially helpful if your case takes months or years to resolve.

### **Document work impact and lost wages.**

If your injuries forced you to miss work, take reduced hours, or switch duties, keep careful records. Ask your employer for a letter that states:

- The days or hours you missed
- Any changes to your duties or schedule
- Whether you used paid time off or took unpaid leave

Also, document any emails or text messages between you and your employer that reference your injury or absences. If your injury affects your long-term ability to work, whether you've had to change jobs, reduce your hours, or retire early, that information is critical in calculating lost earning capacity.

### **Get witness statements.**

If anyone saw the accident happen or observed your condition right afterward, like a bystander, a passenger, or someone you live with, their statement can help confirm how the accident occurred and how you were affected.

Ask them to write down what they saw while it's still fresh in their mind. Your attorney can also contact them for a formal statement. These third-party accounts are especially useful when the other driver tries to deny fault or when injuries are called into question.

Even people who didn't witness the crash but saw the aftermath, like your spouse, co-workers, or neighbors, can offer valuable insight into how the injury changed your behavior, routine, and emotional state.

### **Mistakes that can hurt your documentation**

Even with the best intentions, it's easy to make mistakes after an accident, especially when you're in pain and focused on your injury. Unfortunately, these missteps can weaken your claim or give insurance companies an excuse to reduce or deny your compensation. Avoid these missteps:

- **Waiting too long to see a doctor:** Delaying medical care can make it harder to prove that your injuries were caused by the accident. Insurance adjusters may argue that the injuries weren't serious or that something else caused them. Always seek care immediately and follow up as needed.

- **Underreporting pain or symptoms:** Don't "tough it out" or downplay what you're feeling. Be honest and thorough with your doctors. If you don't mention certain symptoms, they might not be documented, which can hurt your case later.
- **Stopping treatment early:** If you stop going to physical therapy or skip follow-up visits, it may seem like you've recovered even if you haven't. Insurance companies watch for gaps in treatment and will use them to argue that you're no longer injured. Always follow your provider's plan, and let your lawyer know if you're considering changes to your care.
- **Not keeping records organized:** Lost paperwork, missing receipts, or scattered photos can slow down your claim or lead to missed opportunities. Create a dedicated folder – physical or digital – to store all your medical records, bills, injury photos, correspondence, and journal entries.
- **Talking about your injuries on social media:** Be cautious with posts, photos, or comments. Insurance companies may monitor your accounts and use anything they find to question your injuries. A single smiling selfie or workout update could be taken out of context and used against you.

If something seems relevant, it probably is. Make a note of it and always keep your attorney in the loop. Your lawyer can help you understand what matters most and ensure you're protecting your rights every step of the way.

### **Don't let missing documentation hurt your claim**

When it comes to building a strong injury claim, documentation can make or break your case. Medical records, photos, journals, and proof of lost income all help tell the full story of how the accident has impacted your life, and the more detailed your evidence, the harder it is for insurance companies to deny you the compensation you deserve.

At [The Law Offices of Casey D. Shomo, P.A.](#), we know what it takes to build a winning case. Our Palm Beach County legal team works closely with injury victims to make sure no detail is overlooked. From day one, we can advise you on what to document, help gather supporting evidence, and fight for every dollar you're owed. [Contact us](#) today for a [free case review](#).

*"I am incredibly grateful for Casey Shomo and his fantastic team. Their knowledge, kindness, and genuine care made a world of difference after I experienced a severe auto accident. They were always available to answer my questions and provided clear guidance throughout the process. Thanks to their dedication and expertise, we ultimately achieved a positive outcome. I highly recommend their services to anyone in need of a compassionate and skilled legal team. I will never be able to thank them enough!" - Gavin M., ★ ★ ★ ★ ★*