

Dr. Mark Saracino
Board Certified
Chiropractic Neurologist

1150 First Avenue, Suite 120
King of Prussia PA 19406-1341
610 337 3335 voice
610 337 4858 fax
Mark.Saracino1@juno.com
www.DrSaracino.com

Car Accidents Cause Low Back Pain

Although neck pain is more commonly experienced after a car accident, low back pain hurts more! The low back being nestled in the seat and supported by the back rest, is, as most think, less often hurt after an impact, but the contrary is true for its suffering. Here's how.

Most commonly, one is stopped then struck on the rear behind by another vehicle during an accident. Driver and passengers in the stopped vehicle usually do not see or hear the approaching vehicle until impact. Being able to see ahead, the striking vehicle's passengers can prepare for impact and brace themselves.

The trunk moves backward into the back rest of the seat, then forward onto the shoulder harness which braises the chest wall and twists the trunk. The shoulder harness causes more irritation than the seat belt, because the pelvis is better stabilized on its bottom being firmly planted onto the seat cushion.

The muscles that rotate the trunk become injured which initiated a reflex making the muscles that extend and hold the trunk erect to become excessively tight, too. The resulting muscle spasm effects the middle back through pelvis because the muscles that hold us erectly start in the rib cage and run down to the top of the hip bone right below the belt.

This instinctual reaction, known as muscle spasm, prevents the trunk from moving as it should and it compresses the low back spinal nerves sometimes causing pain which radiates into the legs.

The backward movement of the trunk from the impact rapidly stretches the muscles in the FRONT of the low back, the abdominal and psoas muscles. This prevents us from standing erectly after getting out of the car or sitting for periods of time. The shoulders compensate for the forward bending while standing by pulling backward which adds even more muscle tightness and pain.

The low back muscles, front and back, are quite large so they drain more energy from the body than neck muscle spasm. The excessive muscle tightness takes large amounts of nutrients from the blood which decreases the nutrient and energy supply to the organs. All of us know how draining pain is, additionally; this produces sluggish digestion, fatigue and restless sleep.

Adhesions are excess repair fibers that form in really tight muscles as early as two days after the onset of spasm! Treating oneself with bed rest and pain killers only compounds the deleterious effects of the spasm and its resulting adhesion formation, because each are left unabated. When lots of adhesions form in muscles from waiting too long to receive therapy after an accident, it becomes more difficult to reduce the spasm, thereafter. Careful manipulation, massage and physical therapy, which I render, should be started immediately after a car accident.

Do not try stretching on your own or have it rendered by a therapist, because it will irritate the spasm. Soft-tissue (massage) and physical therapy work best in the initial phase of therapy.

Chiropractic neurologists are well-qualified to treat such conditions not only because of the nerve involvement, but because we have substantial training and experience in massage, physical and manipulative therapies.

Sincerely,
Mark Saracino, DC, DACAN
Diplomat American Chiropractic Academy of Neurology