

## Should I get checked by a chiropractor after a motor vehicle accident?

It's important to protect your health after a motor vehicle accident. It may take several days or even weeks before you notice any complaints. Do not try to "wait it out". Below are 9 key points that everyone should know.

- ✓ Research concludes that an individual can sustain ligamentous injury to the neck from rear-end collisions at impact speeds as low as 2 miles per hour.
- ✓ Research also concludes that rear-end impacts of as little as 5 miles per hour increase significant patient symptoms.
- ✓ Motor vehicles are designed to allow for impacts of up to 15 miles per hour. *What does this mean?* Your car can be damage free, but you may not be as lucky.
- ✓ Muscle and ligaments injuries are slow to resolve, sometimes taking over a year. Most injuries achieve symptom-free status approximately 6 months post injury.
- ✓ You can be pain-free after an accident, but still have significant injury to the spine and the surrounding muscles.
- ✓ Within 72 hours of an accident or injury, the body may begin to lay down scar tissue, which is irreversible.
- ✓ You should be evaluated by a Doctor of Chiropractic within 72 hours (ideally) of an accident, injury, or fall.
- ✓ Children should be restrained in rear-facing car seats until 4 years old or until they reach the weight of 30 pounds.
- ✓ A properly adjusted headrest should be at least as high as the center of the skull and within 1" from the back of the head.

Written by: Dr. Heather Yost, DACCP  
Urbandale Living Magazine January 2014