

# Common Injuries in T-Bone Accidents and How to Pursue Compensation

## A Pittsburgh attorney can fight for your rights after a side-impact collision

A [T-bone crash](#) (sometimes called a side-impact or broadside collision) occurs when the front of one vehicle slams into the side of another, forming the shape of a “T.” These wrecks usually take place at intersections when someone runs a red light, blows through a stop sign, or misjudges who has the right-of-way.

Because the side of a vehicle offers little protection (just a thin door and window), the people sitting closest to the impact absorb most of the force.

Side-impact crashes are generally less common than head-on or rear-end collisions, but they tend to be more dangerous. Here’s what you need to know if you’re involved in this type of crash in Pittsburgh.

## What injuries happen in a T-bone crash?

Every accident is different, but certain injuries appear repeatedly in broadside collisions because of the way a body moves at impact. These include:

- **Head and brain trauma:** When one vehicle hits the side of another, a person’s head can strike the window or door frame, or snap violently from side to side. This is why side impacts often injure the head and chest. People may suffer concussions, skull fractures, or traumatic brain injuries.
- **Neck and spinal injuries:** The sudden jolt of a T-bone crash can cause whiplash, a rapid back-and-forth motion of the neck. There may also be hyperextension and hyperflexion of the cervical spine.
- **Chest injuries:** Chest injuries are a significant contributor to trauma fatalities and are commonly caused by blunt forces like motor-vehicle collisions.
- **Internal organ injuries:** The force of a broadside collision can drive the door into a person’s torso, damaging internal organs. The spleen, liver, kidneys, and intestines are especially vulnerable. Internal bleeding or organ rupture can be life-threatening.
- **Pelvic, hip and lower-extremity injuries:** Fractures of the pelvis, hips, femur or lower leg bones are common. Pelvic and hip fractures can be particularly dangerous for older adults because they increase the risk of blood clots and long-term mobility issues.
- **Shoulder and arm injuries:** People often instinctively brace themselves, which can cause fractures or dislocations in the shoulder or arm. Broken collarbones, torn rotator cuffs and wrist fractures frequently result.

- **Emotional and psychological trauma:** Serious crashes leave emotional scars. Survivors often experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression or sleep problems.
- **Long-term and secondary complications:** Some injuries turn into chronic conditions. Nerve damage, chronic pain and reduced mobility can persist for years. Brain injuries may cause lasting cognitive impairment, and spinal injuries can lead to permanent paralysis.

## Why do T-bone crashes happen?

Most broadside collisions happen because someone fails to follow the rules of the road.

Common causes include:

- **Running a red light or stop sign:** Many crashes occur when a driver accelerates through an intersection against the signal or fails to stop.
- **Failure to yield:** Drivers turning left often misjudge the speed of oncoming traffic.
- **Poor visibility:** Parked cars, trees and buildings can hide cross traffic. In older cities with hills, sight lines can be especially limited.
- **Failing to adjust to bad weather:** How drivers behave during inclement weather can lead to a side-impact crash. Rain, snow, ice and fog make signals harder to see and reduce traction.
- **Vehicle size and weight differences:** When a tall or heavy vehicle collides with a smaller car, its bumper may intrude directly into the passenger compartment.
- **Distractions and impairment:** Texting, eating, talking on the phone or driving under the influence substantially increases the risk of running a light or blowing a stop sign.

## How do I build a claim after a T-bone crash in Pittsburgh?

If you're hurt in a T-bone collision, you may be entitled to recover damages for medical expenses, lost income, pain and suffering, and other losses. But the steps you take after a crash can impact the compensation you receive.

First, get checked by a doctor as soon as possible, even if you have no obvious injuries. Some injuries, such as brain trauma or internal bleeding, appear later. A medical record links your injuries directly to the crash.

If you can, take photos of vehicle damage, the intersection, skid marks and traffic signals. Obtain contact information for witnesses. Call the police to create an official report.

To prove negligence, you need evidence that the other driver violated traffic laws. This can include:

- Police reports noting citations or observations about right-of-way
- Witness statements describing who entered the intersection against the signal
- Traffic camera footage from red-light cameras
- Event data recorders that record speed, braking, and throttle position
- Expert analysis on the crash scene, skid marks, and vehicle damage

You should also document all costs, including travel to medical appointments, household help during recovery and modifications to your home or vehicle. Be mindful of deadlines.

Pennsylvania law requires personal injury claims to be filed within a limited period following the crash. Missing this statutory deadline can bar your claim, so consult a lawyer promptly.

### **What challenges might I face when pursuing a T-bone accident claim?**

When you're hurt in a T-bone collision, recovering compensation is rarely straightforward. One of the first hurdles is proving who was actually at fault. If both drivers made mistakes (for example, one ran a light while the other was speeding) insurance companies may argue that you share blame. Without clear evidence, determining responsibility becomes difficult.

[Dealing with insurance companies](#) is another major challenge. After you report the crash, the at-fault driver's insurance provider may offer a quick settlement, but initial offers rarely cover all medical costs or future losses. Adjusters often try to reduce your compensation by claiming your injuries aren't serious, arguing that you were partly at fault or relying on incomplete reports to increase your liability.

They may pressure you into a low settlement to avoid a larger payout. Challenging these tactics requires the help of a skilled Pittsburgh car accident lawyer. Having legal help levels the playing field and helps ensure your claim is supported by solid evidence, so the insurance company can't unfairly minimize your compensation.

### **How do you prove fault in a T-bone crash?**

Proving fault in a T-bone crash isn't just about pointing fingers; it's about building a clear story of what happened and why. Because these wrecks typically occur at intersections, the key question is often "who had the right-of-way?" To answer that, you'll need an attorney who can conduct a thorough investigation.

Here are four criteria that help establish fault:

- **Duty of care:** Everyone who gets behind the wheel has a legal obligation to obey traffic laws and drive safely. This duty requires drivers to stop at red lights, yield when turning and generally act as a reasonably prudent driver would.

- **Breach of duty:** You must show that the other driver failed to meet that duty by doing something careless, such as running a stop sign or driving distracted. Evidence like traffic-camera footage, witness statements or a police report can help here.
- **Causation:** It's not enough to show a violation; you must link their breach directly to your injuries. In other words, but for their failure to stop or yield, the crash would not have happened and you wouldn't be hurt.
- **Damages:** Finally, you need to prove that you suffered actual harm because of the collision – medical bills, lost wages, property damage or pain and suffering. Without documented losses, there's nothing for a court or insurer to compensate.

### **How can a Pittsburgh car accident lawyer help if I'm hurt in a T-bone crash?**

If you were injured in a T-bone collision, the legal team at [Romanow Law Group](#) is ready to stand by your side. Our experienced Pittsburgh car accident lawyers know how to investigate these crashes and fight back against insurance companies that try to downplay your injuries. We can handle every aspect of your claim so you can focus on healing. When we take a case, we're committed to pursuing the full value of your losses, not just the quick settlement an insurance company might offer.

Your first step is a [free consultation](#), which is a conversation rather than a sales pitch. We'll listen closely to your story, review your crash report and medical records, and explain your legal options. There's no obligation, and whether you talk to us at our downtown Pittsburgh office or from your hospital bed, you'll get honest answers and practical advice.

Our work is done on a [contingency fee](#) basis, which means you pay nothing up front, and we don't get paid unless we recover money for you. If you're ready to take that next step, [contact us](#) to schedule your free consultation. We serve clients throughout Pittsburgh and the surrounding communities, and if you can't come to us, we'll come to you.