

What to Know About Soft Tissue Injuries After a Car Accident in Maine

Our Maine car accident lawyers explain whiplash & other common injuries

[Car accidents](#) often leave people seriously hurt. One of the most common injuries people sustain in car crashes in Maine is soft tissue injuries such as whiplash.

But what are soft tissue injuries? Why do car accidents cause so many of them? And how do you know if you have a soft tissue injury like whiplash? What are the warning signs and common soft tissue injury symptoms? Our experienced Maine car accident attorneys explain what you need to know.

What is a soft tissue injury?

A soft tissue injury is a medical term used to describe a wide range of injuries affecting any non-bony tissues in someone's musculoskeletal system. In other words, soft tissue injuries cover any injury to soft body parts that help the body move – such as muscles, tendons and ligaments.

What are common soft tissue injuries?

Soft tissue injuries are generally divided into two categories – repetitive strain injuries and acute soft tissue injuries. Repetitive strain soft tissue injuries often occur slowly over time due to overuse. Acute soft tissue injuries are the result of an immediate, one-time event like a car accident.

Common soft tissue injuries caused by car accidents include:

- **Whiplash** – A type of neck injury in which the muscles, tendons, and ligaments are stretched and strained due to the quick backward and forward motion of a car crash.
- **Muscle strains** – These occur when muscle fibers are stretched or torn, often leading to pain, swelling and difficulty moving the affected area.
- **Ligament sprains** – Sprains involve ligaments (tissue that connects bones) being overstretched or torn, which can cause joint instability.
- **Tendon injuries** – Tendons (tissue that connects muscle to bone) can become inflamed, partially torn or completely ruptured, often significantly limiting strength and range of motion.

- **Contusions (bruises)** – Bruises form when small blood vessels break under the skin, leading to discoloration, tenderness and occasional swelling around the area.
- **Bursitis** – This painful condition develops when fluid-filled sacs around joints become inflamed, making even simple movements uncomfortable and difficult.
- **Deep tissue bruising** – Severe bruises can affect deeper tissues below the surface, causing intense pain, swelling, and longer healing times than surface bruises.
- **Myofascial injuries** – These involve damage to the connective tissues surrounding muscles, sometimes leading to chronic pain and reduced flexibility.
- **Herniated or bulging discs** – Discs between vertebrae can slip or rupture, pressing on nerves and causing radiating pain throughout the body.

Why do car accidents often cause whiplash and other soft tissue injuries?

Car accidents create sudden forces that put extreme stress on the body. Even when vehicles are moving at lower speeds, the quick and unexpected impact can stretch or tear soft tissues. These injuries often happen because the body is not prepared for the violent motion of a crash. For example:

- Collisions often snap the head and neck back and forth, straining muscles, tendons, and ligaments.
- Crashes can twist the spine and torso in unnatural ways, causing sprains and strains.
- Seatbelts and airbags, while lifesaving, can press forcefully against the chest and shoulders, leading to bruising and tissue damage.
- Sudden stops may cause muscles to contract quickly, creating microtears and inflammation.
- The impact of a crash can also cause discs in the spine to bulge or rupture, pressing on surrounding nerves.

Soft tissue injuries from car accidents should never be taken lightly. They can be painful and often take weeks or months to heal. Some injuries even become chronic if left untreated. Seeking medical attention right away is important to avoid long-term problems.

What types of car accidents cause soft tissue injuries?

Certain types of car accidents are more likely to cause soft tissue injuries than others. These crashes create violent forces that strain muscles, tendons and ligaments in the body. Even a crash at a lower speed can leave someone with serious soft tissue damage. Here are some examples:

- Rear-end accidents are one of the leading causes of soft tissue injuries, including whiplash, where the head and neck are suddenly thrown forward and backward.
- Side-impact or T-bone crashes often twist the spine and shoulders, creating sprains and strains throughout the torso.
- Head-on collisions can cause the chest, arms and legs to slam against hard surfaces, resulting in severe bruising or torn tissues.
- Rollover accidents put stress on the entire body, often leading to widespread soft tissue damage from twisting and crushing forces.
- Multi-vehicle pileups increase the chance of multiple impacts, compounding injuries to muscles, tendons and ligaments.

The type of crash can play a big role in the injuries you sustain. Understanding how accidents happened helps doctors identify what injuries to look for. It also helps lawyers explain to insurance companies exactly why your injuries are connected to your crash.

What are common soft tissue injury symptoms?

Soft tissue injury symptoms can cover a wide range. Depending on what type of injury you sustained, your symptoms could include:

- Pain and tenderness in the affected area.
- Swelling or inflammation that gets worse over time.
- Stiffness and reduced range of motion in joints or muscles.
- Bruising and skin discoloration from broken blood vessels.
- Muscle spasms that limit normal movement.
- Tingling or numbness caused by pressure on nerves.
- Headaches, often connected to whiplash or neck strains.
- Fatigue or difficulty sleeping due to ongoing pain.

Some symptoms do not always show up right away after a car accident. Delayed symptoms sometimes take hours or even days to appear. The important part is to pay

attention to any possible warning signs of a soft tissue injury. And seek immediate medical attention.

How do doctors diagnose soft tissue injuries?

Diagnosing soft tissue injuries can be difficult because they are not always visible on the surface. This is why doctors often use a combination of tests and medical evaluations to confirm an injury. Some of the ways doctors often diagnose soft tissue injuries include:

- Physical exams to check range of motion, swelling, tenderness and strength.
- X-rays to rule out broken bones that may cause similar pain.
- MRI scans to provide detailed images of muscles, tendons and ligaments.
- Ultrasound tests to detect tears, inflammation or fluid buildup in tissues.
- A review of medical history and accident details to connect injuries to the crash.

Once a diagnosis is made, doctors can recommend treatment options that fit the specific injury. Proper documentation of medical tests is also critical in proving a link between your accident and your injuries. These records often serve as valuable evidence in support of injury settlement claims or verdicts.

What medical treatments exist for soft tissue injuries?

Treatments for soft tissue injuries vary depending on the type and severity of the damage. Often, the goal is to reduce pain, restore mobility and prevent long-term complications. Doctors may recommend different therapies to speed up recovery, such as:

- Rest and immobilization to give the injured tissues time to heal.
- Ice and heat therapy to reduce swelling and improve circulation.
- Prescription or over-the-counter medications to manage pain and inflammation.
- Physical therapy exercises to rebuild strength and restore range of motion.
- In severe cases, surgery may be necessary to repair torn tendons or ligaments.

Treating soft tissue injuries early helps avoid chronic pain and long-lasting complications. With proper medical care, many people make a full recovery. However, some injuries take months to heal, which makes following through with treatment even more important.

How long do car accident soft tissue injuries last?

The recovery time for soft tissue injuries can vary widely depending on the severity of the injury and other factors, including how the injury is being treated. Some minor sprains and bruises may heal in just a few weeks. More serious injuries, such as whiplash or torn ligaments, can last for months or even longer. Chronic pain can develop if the injury does not heal correctly.

For many people, the pain and stiffness from soft tissue injuries can interfere with work and daily life. This is why medical treatment is so important. A doctor can create a recovery plan that helps reduce long-term symptoms. Without proper care, the effects of a soft tissue injury can linger for years.

Each case is different, which is why no two recovery timelines are the same. Working closely with medical professionals and an experienced car accident lawyer can give you a better idea of how long your recovery may take – and how much money you will need while you recover.

Who's responsible for paying for my car accident soft tissue injury?

In Maine, the driver who caused your accident is usually responsible for paying your injury-related expenses. Maine also follows a modified comparative negligence system with a 50% bar. This means your compensation will be reduced by your percentage of fault if you are found partially responsible for causing your accident. If you are found to be more 50% or more at fault, you can't recover compensation.

Ideally, the at-fault driver's insurance company should pay for all your accident-related expenses, including all medical bills, lost income and other financial losses. However, insurance companies often try to reduce or deny these payments. That is why proving fault is so important in soft tissue injury claims.

If another driver is clearly at fault, their insurance company may still argue that your injuries are not serious. They may also try to blame your symptoms on a pre-existing medical condition. Having strong medical evidence and legal representation can level the playing field and protect your right to full compensation.

What should I do if my soft tissue injury claim is denied?

Insurance companies sometimes deny valid soft tissue injury claims, leaving victims without the help they need. If this happens, you do not have to accept their decision. There are legal steps you can take to demand the money you deserve.

The first step is to review the denial letter carefully. It should explain why the claim was rejected. Often, the denial is based on lack of evidence or disputes about how the injury

occurred. Your lawyer can review your letter with you and help gather stronger medical records and additional proof in support of your case.

A lawyer can also negotiate directly with the insurance company to reopen the claim. If the insurer still refuses to be fair, your attorney can take legal action and file a soft tissue injury lawsuit on your behalf. Having legal support can increase your chances of overturning the denial and getting the compensation you deserve.

Can I sue the other driver for my soft tissue injury?

Yes, you have the right to take legal action and file a lawsuit against the other driver if their negligence caused your soft tissue injury. A lawsuit allows you to seek compensation beyond what the insurance company offers. This may include damages (the legal term for compensation for financial losses) for medical care, lost wages and pain and suffering. Taking legal action is often necessary when the other side refuses to take responsibility.

Filing a lawsuit does not always mean your case will go to trial. Many cases are settled before reaching the courtroom. In particular, many insurance companies suddenly agree to return to the negotiating table once they see that you're serious about your legal case. And rather than going to trial, many insurance companies agree to increase their settlement offer.

Suing the other driver sends a strong, clear message that reckless behavior has consequences. It gives your legal case the best opportunity for success. That way, you're not left paying for expenses that were not your fault. With the right legal help, you can pursue justice and demand maximum financial compensation.

How can a lawyer help with my car accident soft tissue injury case?

Having a skilled Maine car accident lawyer on your side can make a big difference in the outcome of your case. Soft tissue injury claims can be complicated, and insurance companies often downplay them. An experienced Maine car accident attorney can level the playing field in many different ways. A lawyer can:

- gather medical evidence that proves the connection between your accident and your injury
- work with doctors and medical experts to show the severity and long-term impact of your condition
- collect additional evidence like police reports, accident photos and witness statements
- handle negotiations with the insurance company so you are not pressured into a low settlement

- file a lawsuit on your behalf if the insurance company refuses to negotiate in good faith
- represent you in court and present your case clearly and convincingly to a judge and jury

With strong legal representation, you do not have to face these challenges alone. A lawyer can protect your rights and make sure your case reflects the full financial impact of your soft tissue injury. Their knowledge of Maine car accident laws can also help avoid mistakes that could weaken your claim. Experience matters – and so does your case.

Get a Maine car accident attorney who fights for you

Car accidents involving soft tissue injuries often quickly turn into complicated legal cases. Instead of getting the support you need and deserve, don't be surprised if you encounter obstacles from insurance companies that refuse to pay you the money you need to get your life back on track.

Fortunately, you're not alone. Our Maine soft tissue car accident lawyers at Romanow Law Group can help. Our legal team has the knowledge and experience you need to succeed. That's because we have been skillfully handling such complex legal cases for years.

To learn more about how we can help you, [contact us](#) and schedule an appointment with an attorney you can count on in a crisis. We don't back down from a fight. We rise to the challenge.