

# 5 STEPS TO TAKE IF YOU ARE HIT BY A MOTORIST: A PEDESTRIAN'S GUIDE

Traveling is one of the most dangerous activities you engage in each day. On college campuses, pedestrian accidents are particularly frequent – often with lethal consequences. It is critical to respond quickly and properly if you are hit by a motorist.

## 1 GET TO SAFETY

Secondary accidents can cause just as much damage as the initial collision. It is important to remove yourself from the road and get to a safe position where you cannot be hit by another car or cause another accident. If possible, move objects or debris from the road to ensure there is no additional risk to yourself or others.

## 2 ASSESS YOUR INJURY

In the shock of an accident you may not initially appreciate the extent of your injuries. If you do not experience any pain, you might assume that you do not need medical attention. In most cases, however, it is prudent to seek out medical care even if only as a precaution. Seeing a doctor as soon as possible after an accident can ensure you receive treatment and prevent complications from developing. Many internal injuries can only be accurately identified by trained professionals – including traumatic brain injuries and concussions. In serious accidents where there is a risk of spinal cord injury, do not try to move. Doing so may aggravate the damage.

## 3 CONTACT AUTHORITIES

If immediate medical attention is needed, dial 911 to call an ambulance. It is also critical to alert the police so that a proper report can be created to document the incident. You may want to contact relevant insurance companies. The nature of the insurance laws in your state will determine from whom you will be able to collect compensation in a claim or civil lawsuit. Involving your insurance company allows you to present your side of the story via your own claims processing procedures.

## 4 COLLECT INFORMATION

You should exchange basic information with the motorist and other relevant parties. Do your best to document what happened. Photographs, witness contact information, and statements made by the motorist can be very useful if there is a dispute over who was at fault for the accident. Avoid making any statements about fault or what you believe happened. Over time your recollection of the incident may fade. It is prudent to write down all of your thoughts about the accident. Those thoughts should include as much detail as possible including information like the weather, location of the car, status of traffic lights, and similar matters.

## 5 CONSIDER YOUR LEGAL OPTIONS

Depending on the specifics of the incident, both civil and criminal cases may be initiated. Consider contacting an attorney to protect your rights.