

What Are the Signs of a Wrist Fracture After a Car Accident?

Recognizing symptoms and seeking prompt medical attention is critical.

Wrist fractures are painful and debilitating injuries that crash victims frequently sustain in [car accidents](#). A wrist fracture occurs when one of the small, interconnected bones in the wrist cracks or shatters. This can cause pain, swelling, and other symptoms that interfere with daily activities like driving, working, typing, eating, and drinking.

Early diagnosis of a wrist fracture is crucial to ensure the best possible outcome. A prompt diagnosis can help prevent long-term complications and reduce the risk of permanent damage. However, it can be challenging to identify a wrist fracture after a car accident since the symptoms can be similar to other injuries, such as sprains or strains. That's why it's essential to seek medical attention as soon as possible after an accident, even if the symptoms appear mild.

It's also critical to talk to an experienced car accident attorney if you suffer a wrist fracture in a car crash that was someone else's fault. A lawyer can help you understand your legal rights and options and assist you in seeking compensation for your medical bills, lost wages, pain and suffering, and other related damages.

How car accidents cause wrist fractures

A motor vehicle crash can lead to a wrist fracture in several ways, including impact, airbag deployment, and "FOOSH injury."

- The **impact of a car crash** can cause a driver or passenger's wrist to twist or bend unnaturally, leading to a fracture. For example, when a person braces themselves against the steering wheel during a collision, they can put pressure on their wrist, causing the bones to crack or shatter. Loose objects in the vehicle can also become dangerous projectiles during a crash and strike the wrist, causing a fracture.
- **Airbag deployment** can also cause wrist fractures. While airbags can save lives by cushioning the impact of a collision, they can also cause injuries when they deploy. If a person's hands or arms are in the path of the airbag during deployment, they can sustain injuries to their wrists and hands. Sometimes, the airbag can even propel the hand and forearm into the side panel, rearview mirror, or windshield, causing serious fractures.
- **FOOSH** stands for "fall on outstretched hand." It's a common instinct to use our hands to brace ourselves during a fall, using the extremities to protect the body. When a person is involved in a car accident and thrown from the vehicle or falls out of it, they may use their hands to break their fall, leading to a wrist fracture. These types of injuries are particularly common in motorcycle, bicycle, and pedestrian accidents.

Remember, if you or a loved one has suffered a wrist fracture in a car accident, seeking prompt medical attention and consulting with an attorney can help ensure you receive the proper care and financial compensation you deserve.

What are the types of wrist fractures?

Wrist fractures can vary in severity, and the type of fracture sustained in a car accident will determine the best course of treatment. Here are the different types of wrist fractures that can occur after a car accident and their corresponding symptoms:

- **Stable Fracture:** A stable wrist fracture means the bones have not moved out of place. Symptoms may include pain, swelling, tenderness, and difficulty moving or using the hand and wrist.
- **Unstable Fracture:** Displaced or unstable wrist fractures require the bones to be set, and once they are stable, the wrist can be fitted with a cast or splint. Symptoms may include severe pain when moving, gripping, or squeezing, numbness or tingling in the fingers, and bruising.
- **Comminuted Fracture:** A comminuted wrist fracture is a severe type of fracture where the surface of the joint is cracked, or the joint itself is shattered into two or more pieces. This type of fracture often requires surgery to repair. Symptoms may include severe pain, swelling, deformity, and difficulty moving or using the hand and wrist.
- **Open Fracture:** An open wrist fracture occurs when a bone fragment pierces through the skin. This type of fracture is a medical emergency and requires immediate surgical intervention. Symptoms may include bone visibly protruding from the skin, severe pain, bleeding, and swelling.
- **Distal Radius Fracture:** The radius is the largest bone in the forearm, and when it breaks about an inch from the end of the bone, it's called a distal radius fracture. Symptoms may include pain, swelling, tenderness, and difficulty moving or using the hand and wrist. The types of fractures that can affect the distal radius include intra-articular (the break extends into the wrist joint) and extra-articular (the break does not affect the wrist joint).
- **Scaphoid Fracture:** The scaphoid bone sits just above the radius bone and below the thumb. This type of fracture is often confused with a wrist sprain. Signs of a fractured scaphoid include dull or deep pain on the thumb side, swelling at the base of the thumb, or pain that gets worse when pinching or gripping something.

Diagnosing a wrist fracture requires a physical exam and imaging tests, such as X-rays or CT scans, to determine the severity and location of the fracture. Common treatments for wrist fractures include splints or casts to immobilize the wrist and allow the bones to heal properly. For more severe fractures, surgery may be required to align the bones and hold them in place with pins, screws, or plates. Hand therapy can also help recover strength, motion, and dexterity after a wrist fracture.

Compensation for a wrist fracture after a car accident

After suffering a wrist fracture in a car accident that was not your fault, it's important to understand your legal rights and potential options for compensation. Car accident claims can typically be made through insurance coverage, such as the at-fault driver's liability insurance.

However, insurance companies may not always offer fair compensation for all the damages incurred, including medical bills, lost wages, and pain and suffering. That's why it's important to seek legal help from an experienced attorney who can help you navigate the complex legal process and fight for the [compensation you deserve](#).

At [Smith & Hassler](#), our Houston car accident lawyers can help gather and preserve evidence, build a rock-solid legal case on your behalf, negotiate with insurance companies, and represent you in court, if necessary. We also offer legal representation on a [contingency fee](#) basis, which means you pay no fees unless we win your case.

Don't hesitate to seek legal help if you've suffered a wrist fracture in a wreck caused by someone else's negligence. [Contact us today](#) for a free consultation.