

What Should I Do If I'm In a Car Accident While Pregnant?

Car accident claims involving pregnant women can be complex

Being involved in a car accident while pregnant is a frightening and stressful experience. A collision doesn't just pose serious risks to pregnant women but also endangers their unborn children.

If you or your unborn child was harmed in a car accident, you have the right to hold the negligent party accountable and seek compensation for your damages. Unfortunately, insurance companies are more concerned with keeping their costs down than ensuring your full and fair compensation.

An experienced [car accident lawyer](#) at [Goldberg Finnegan](#) in Maryland can fight to protect your legal rights and advocate for a maximum settlement or court award.

What are common injuries to pregnant women after a car accident?

Historical data from the [Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine](#) (AAAM) demonstrates the risks motor vehicle crashes pose to pregnant women and their unborn children. The most common injuries identified in the study include:

Placental Injuries

Car accidents often cause two types of placenta injuries to pregnant women: abruptions and lacerations. A placenta abruption can occur when the placenta detaches from the uterine wall and disrupts the oxygen and nutrient supply to the fetus.

According to the AAAM study, this injury occurred in 1 to 5% of minor car accidents and 20 to 50% of severe crashes. Complete abruption was identified in 42 cases, with 22 also involving direct fetal injury.

A placental laceration occurs when there are tears or cuts in the placenta. In the reviewed cases, lacerations were reported in 8 cases.

Uterine Injuries

A uterine rupture is a rare but severe injury where the uterine wall tears. It occurs in less than 1% of pregnant trauma cases, with one complete transection reported.

Cuts and tears in the uterus were reported in 10 out of 24 uterine injury cases. These injuries often resulted from direct loading by seat belts or steering wheels.

Pelvic Fractures

Broken pelvic bones were present in 16 cases. These fractures can increase the risk of injury to both the mother and fetus. Additionally, out of 24 cases with uterine injury, 6 also involved pelvic fractures.

Direct Fetal Injuries

Fetal head injuries are among the most common fetal injuries and were reported in 22 cases. They often result from impact with the maternal pelvis and spine during a crash. Additionally, fetal thoracic and abdominal/chest injuries were found in six cases.

Fetal spine and extremity injuries were the least common direct fetal injuries, with only one case documented.

Other Complications

Trauma from a car accident can lead to early birth, with associated risks such as low birth weight and respiratory distress. Of the 16 negative outcome cases, 9 resulted in premature delivery.

Additionally, a stillbirth may stem from a car accident. When this occurs, the fetus may die before or during birth, sometimes without visible injuries. In the reviewed cases, stillbirth occurred in 8 instances, though some cases involved maternal death.

Additional complications, such as neonatal brain damage or hydrocephalus, may result from crash-related trauma. In one case, a neonate born months after the crash was diagnosed with brain damage.

What damages can I recover after a car accident as a pregnant woman?

If you're a pregnant woman who has been in a car accident, you may be eligible to recover compensation for several types of damages, including:

Medical expenses

You can claim compensation for all medical expenses related to your car accident, including:

- Emergency medical care, such as hospital visits, surgeries, and immediate treatment.
- Follow-up visits, physical therapy, and any other medical treatments needed for recovery.
- Expenses related to prenatal care that might be affected or altered due to your car accident.

Lost wages

If you are unable to work due to injuries or complications stemming from your car accident, you may be able to recover lost wages. This can include:

- Income lost from the time of the crash to the present.
- Estimated future income loss if your injuries impact your ability to work long-term.

Pain and suffering

You may be eligible for compensation for physical pain, emotional distress, and reduced quality of life. These non-economic damages include, but are not limited to:

- Discomfort and pain resulting from your injuries.
- Anxiety, depression, or other emotional impacts from your car accident and its aftermath.

Injuries to the unborn child

If your car accident has caused harm to your unborn child, you may be able to seek damages for:

- Expenses for any medical care or treatment the child needs.
- Costs related to any long-term care or special needs if the child suffers from a permanent injury or condition.

What should I do if I'm in a car accident while pregnant?

Here's a general guideline on what to do:

Contact the police

Even if it's just a minor fender bender, a car accident while pregnant is a serious matter. Be sure to call the police immediately to report the crash and wait for an officer to arrive.

A police officer will conduct an initial investigation, speak to all parties involved, speak to witnesses, and make observations. Their findings will be documented in a detailed crash report, which you or your attorney can obtain from the responding law enforcement agency.

This includes:

- The date, time, and location of the crash.
- The parties involved in the crash.
- Statements made by drivers, passengers, and witnesses.
- The weather and road conditions.
- Citations and arrests (if there are any).
- A drawing or diagram showing how the crash likely occurred.

Get emergency medical help

Even if you feel perfectly fine after a car accident, you need to get immediate medical help for you and your baby. The shock and adrenaline of a car accident can mask any initial pain or symptoms. Plus, many injuries take hours or days to develop as inflammation begins to set in. This is common with whiplash, internal injuries, and concussions.

Additionally, a car accident could harm your unborn child, even if it didn't cause a lot of harm to you.

An immediate medical evaluation allows a doctor to identify potential injuries and begin treatment before they worsen. It can also help establish a clear link to your car accident. This makes it difficult for insurance companies to claim that your condition is exaggerated or unrelated to your crash.

Document everything related to the crash

Don't leave any stone unturned when saving documents related to your crash. If you're able to collect evidence at the scene of the crash, take pictures of the vehicles involved and any visible injuries you sustained. Also, capture the road conditions, nearby signs, traffic signals, and other important details.

You should also exchange all contact and insurance information with the other party involved in the crash. If there were any witnesses at the scene, get their contact information and accounts of what they saw. If any witnesses captured your crash on a dashcam, ask for a copy of the footage.

After leaving the crash scene, keep all medical bills, appointment logs, pay stubs, vehicle repair estimates, and other documents that validate your economic damages. Also, keep a daily journal that demonstrates the pain and suffering, and diminished quality of life you endured as a result of the crash.

A Maryland car accident lawyer can use all of the documentation you save as evidence to build a strong case. That includes establishing fault and determining how much money you're entitled to in damages.

File a car accident claim

To file a car accident claim in Maryland, you'll first need to report the crash to your insurance company. Keep it brief and to the point, and don't go into how the crash occurred or who was at fault. Your insurance company only needs the basics: date, time, location, parties involved, and injuries you sustained.

Be aware that the other driver's insurance company will likely contact you and ask for a recorded statement. Anything you tell them can be misconstrued as admitting fault and used to downplay or deny your claim.

In Maryland, the insurance company only needs to prove that you're 1% at fault to deny you compensation. You can protect yourself by seeking legal help from an experienced Maryland car accident attorney and letting them handle all communications with the other driver's insurance company.

Our Maryland car accident attorneys are committed to getting justice

If you're a pregnant woman injured in a car accident, the stakes are high for you and your unborn child. Our Maryland car accident lawyers can work tirelessly to gather the facts needed to build your case. We can also negotiate aggressively with insurance companies to ensure you don't end up with a lowball settlement.

We're committed to getting the best outcomes possible for our clients, and our [case results](#) prove it. Some of our most notable cases include:

- **\$4.975 million** to the family of a victim killed in a car accident.
- **\$175,000** to a victim who suffered a broken arm after being hit by a car.

In Maryland, you have up to three years from the date of your crash to file a claim. However, it's best to act fast while the evidence is fresh. It won't cost you anything upfront to hire us. That's because the attorneys at Goldberg Finnegan, LLC work on a contingency fee basis, so we only get paid if we win your case.

With law offices in Silver Spring and Rockville, we proudly serve injured motorists and their families throughout Montgomery, Prince George, Howard, Frederick, and Charles counties. [Contact us online](#) or call us today to schedule your free consultation. We'll be glad to answer your questions and help you explore your legal options moving forward.