



Injury Law Center®

Note: This information is provided to give you a basic understanding of the injury. It is not intended as medical advice. You should consult a qualified medical provider.

OTHER INJURIES

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Scars

Description

When skin or tissue of the body is injured, the body releases collagen, a protein, to repair the damage. Hypertrophic scars are those that do not extend beyond the wound site. Keloid scars are scars that extend and expand beyond the wound site. Keloid scars are raised scars often resulting in a different color than the surrounding skin. Contracture scars are scars caused by the loss of a large section of skin due to an injury or burns. These scars tighten around the wound and often times affect a person's mobility.

Medical Help

A scar is usually permanent and cannot be completely removed. However, treatment ranges from the application of over-the-counter scar ointments to surgical revision. Surgery is usually not indicated for keloid starting because the surgical incision could cause a new scar and create another keloid. If surgery is carried out steroid injections into the scar are often times given following surgery.

Practical Advice-Scars will often fade overtime. It usually takes about a year for the scar to complete its healing. At the end of the year, what remains is a likely permanent.

HELP

If you have suffered a scar or any other type of injury, you should seek appropriate medical help and if your injury was caused by another's negligence or fault, you should seek appropriate legal help bring a claim for compensation.

Feel free to call or e-mail The Injury Law Center® for answers to your questions and help with your legal claim.

Burns

Description

Burns can be caused by excessive heat, radiation, electricity, friction or chemicals. Burns are characterized based upon the severity of the tissue damage by degree. A first degree burn is the least severe and causes redness and swelling in the outermost layers of the skin. A second-degree burn will involve swelling and blistering of the skin and damage may extend to the deeper layers of the skin. A third degree burn destroys all of the skin causing significant scarring and may extend to the underlying fat, muscle and bone.

Medical Help

Treatment for burns consists of first relieving the pain, preventing infection, maintaining proper body fluids. Treatment of a thermal burn, which is different than a chemical or electrical burn, is first to stop the burning process. This is usually accomplished by running cool water over the burned area or soaking it in cool, but not cold water.

Practical Advice-Ice should never be applied to the burn, nor should butter or other oils as this will prevent the heat from escaping and cause the burn to go deeper into the tissue.

A person with serious burns may stop breathing and may need mouth-to-mouth resuscitation immediately. Also a person with severe burns may go into shock. This condition may be helped by lying the person flat and elevating the person's feet at least 12 inches.

The burn patient is usually given antibiotics intravenously to prevent infection. The burn area is cleaned and treated with antibiotic cream or ointment and covered in sterile bandages which are changed frequently throughout a day. Debridement, that is the surgical removal of the dead tissue, is also undertaken. A burn victim will usually have to undergo occupational and physical therapy.

Skin grafts, which involve taking a piece of skin from an unburned portion of the patient's body and transplanting it onto the burned area, is often done when the skin has been so damaged that it cannot properly heal.

Chemical burns should be rinsed with cool water for at least 15 minutes, covered loosely with a sterile dressing and the person should be transported to a hospital for further treatment. Electrical

burns should be covered loosely with sterile dressing and the person should be transported to a hospital for further treatment.

HELP

If you have suffered a burn injury, or any other type of injury, you should seek appropriate medical help and if your injury was caused by another's negligence or fault, you should seek appropriate legal help bring a claim for compensation.

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RSD-Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy or CRPS-Complex Regional Pain Syndrome

Description

RSD is sometimes known as Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) which is a chronic pain condition caused by a traumatic nerve injury. The main symptom of CRPS is continuous, intense pain out of proportion to the severity of the injury, which gets worse rather than better with time. CRPS most often affects the arms, legs, hands or feet. Often the pain spreads to include the entire arm or leg. Typical features include dramatic changes in the color and temperature of the skin over the affected limb or body part, accompanied by intense burning pain, skin sensitivity, sweating, and swelling.

Medical Help

There is no cure for CRPS so treatment is aimed at relieving the pain. Doctors may prescribe topical analgesics, antidepressants, corticosteroids, and opioids to relieve pain. However, no single drug or combination of drugs has produced consistent long-lasting improvement in symptoms. Other treatments may include physical therapy, sympathetic nerve block, spinal cord stimulation and intrathecal drug pumps to deliver opioids and local anesthetic agents via the spinal cord. There is a surgical treatment known as sympathectomy, which is the surgical division or excision of nearby sympathetic nerves.

HELP

If you suffer from RSD or CRPS, or any other type of injury, you should seek appropriate medical help and if your injury was caused by another's negligence or fault, you should seek appropriate legal help bring a claim for compensation.

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Maxillofacial Trauma

Description

Maxillofacial trauma includes trauma to any of the bony or fleshy structures of the face, including the jaw. Trauma may also cause teeth to become loosened, chipped or lost. The eyes, nerves and blood vessels may be injured as well and the facial bones may be fractured by a traumatic blow. The nose and jaw may be fractured in this type of trauma, which can also cause a traumatic brain injury.

Medical Help

Fractures will be treated by orthopedic surgeons. Depending upon the severity of the fracture, internal fixation may or may not be required. A fractured jaw may require surgical mobilization and secured in place with metal pins and wires.

Sometimes, even in a rear end motor vehicle crash, a person can suffer a temporomandibular joint disorder known as TMJ. TMJ can cause pain when chewing, headaches and a clicking in the jaw when the mouth is opened.

Treatment usually consists of prescribing muscle relaxants, and a bite plate which is often worn at night to help realign the mandible (lower jaw) with the upper jaw.

If you have suffered a maxillofacial injury you should seek appropriate medical help and if your injury was caused by another person or entity, you should seek appropriate legal help bring a claim for compensation.

HELP

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Internal Injuries

Description

Internal injuries are injuries to the internal organs of the body. This is usually caused by trauma to the trunk, or also of the body. This trauma is classified into two categories, blunt and penetrating trauma. . Blunt trauma can result in a diverse assortment of injuries to the various organs, including ribs, liver, kidney, heart, spleen, intestines and lungs. Penetrating trauma is trauma from a object such as a bullet or knife. Although there are many internal injuries that can occur from trauma, below are the most common.

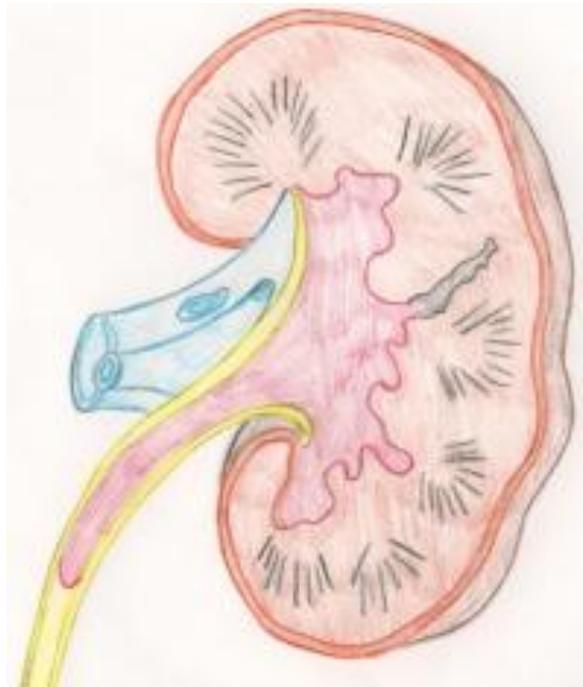
Liver Trauma

Since the liver is the largest organ in the torso, it is often subject to injury from both blunt and penetrating trauma. The most common injury to the liver is a non-bleeding laceration. There are also bleeding lacerations and the most severe injury which is an avulsion-crush injury in which the liver tissue is actually destroyed.

Medical Help

Doctors will attempt to drain any liver injury and control and stop any bleeding. This may involve packing and manual compression of the liver with gauze. It also may involve tying off of injured vessels within the liver. If a part of the liver dies, then that tissue is debrided and removed.

Kidney Injury



Kidneys are frequently injured by blunt trauma. Any blunt trauma to the flank of an individual that is sufficient enough to cause bruising of the flank, raises the possibility that the kidney has been injured.

Practical Advice-If you suspect that your kidney may have been damaged by trauma, you should be sure that the medical personnel test your urine for blood. If there is blood in your urine it is a condition known as hematuria, and should direct the doctors to look closely at your kidneys for damage. Hematuria can lead to high blood pressure.

Medical Help

Most of the time kidney trauma is managed with rest. Surgery may be required however where there is persistent bleeding within the cavity of the torso or leakage of urine.

Spleen Injury

The spleen is an organ that is vital to your immune system. When the spleen is injured many of the symptoms are nonspecific and simply may be indicative of intra-abdominal bleeding. However there are some symptoms that are unique to trauma to the spleen such as hypotension, low blood pressure, and pain at the tip of the left shoulder and elevated white blood cell count.

Practical Advice-Splenic injuries are frequently missed in the initial medical treatment following trauma.

Medical Help

If the spleen has been injured the doctors may remove the spleen, known as a splenectomy. It is also possible to surgically repair the spleen. Nonsurgical treatment consists of the administration of multiple transfusions.

Lung Injuries

Description

The two lungs are held inside the body by transparent layers called pleura. These pleurae keep the lungs in continuity with the chest wall and allow the lungs to expand and contract, which provides oxygen to the body.

When the chest wall has been injured by a laceration of the pleura or damage to the lung itself or a blood vessel in the chest which usually results in accumulation of blood within pleural cavity, this is known as a hemothorax. Often times a fractured rib will produce a laceration to the lung and result in bleeding into the pleural cavity.

Instead of blood, sometimes trauma can create a collection of air or other gas in the pleural cavity sometimes resulting from a leak in the lungs following a laceration of the lung. This is known as a pneumothorax. Rib fractures often cause pneumothorax. The proper treatment of a pneumothorax is the placement of a chest tube.

If the accumulation of blood or air compresses the lungs to an excessive degree, this can cause problems breathing and lead to a lack of oxygen (hypoxia).

A common complication of chest trauma is a pulmonary contusion, which is a bruising to the lung itself, without cutting the lung.

Medical Help

Medical help is imperative in cases of injury to the lungs or surrounding tissue. Treatment is

usually undertaken right away because the first 24 hours after this type of trauma of the most critical.

HELP

If you have suffered an internal injury, or any other type of injury, you should seek appropriate medical help and if your injury was caused by another's negligence or fault, you should seek appropriate legal help bring a claim for compensation.

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