

## Accidents Happen.

Living in the city, car or bike accidents seem to happen with the same frequency as new reality shows. If you find yourself involved in an accident, it is important to remember a few things.

First, make sure you get witness names and phone numbers and file an accident report with the DMV. If the Police come to the scene, request a copy of the Police report.

Second, even if you think you are not hurt, go see a physician. Often serious injury is not even felt until a day or two after the accident. It could even be a week before you start to feel pain. Remember that it is always better to treat an injury than to just "push through it." Aggravating an existing injury with lifting, driving, or physical activity can lead to much worse problems down the road. It is important you see a medical practitioner who understands manual manipulation and soft tissue and trigger point therapies.

Remember that the back is made up of a series of joints, and that whiplash, like a sprained ankle, is a sprain/strain type of injury. For the first forty-eight hours, apply ice and take anti-inflammatory medications (like Ibuprofen) to reduce swelling. Do not apply heat until at least 48 hours later, and until after the swelling has gone down. By this point, it is my opinion that anti-inflammatory meds are not beneficial and can be potentially harmful.

Magnesium and herbs can be used to help reduce general muscle spasm. Metabolites of inflammation can cause muscles to be acidified and spasmodic, but this can be prevented by simply staying hydrated - drinking enough water. Coffee and tea should be avoided, as they are diuretics and contribute to muscle acidity and spasm. Pain medication and sleep aids should be used sparingly. Try to maintain normal physiology. Your physician may also prescribe therapeutic massage.

Sometimes it takes a traumatic event for us to acknowledge our health. Still, day-to-day trauma can take its own toll on you. Many of the same practices used in treating your body after a car accident can be used regularly as good preventive medicine and general maintenance, and will keep your body feeling good and functioning optimally. Massage and trigger-point therapies can de-acidify the muscles and reduce muscle spasm and pain. With less muscle tension, you will have less spinal strain and better vascular and organ function. You will feel better and have more energy. Neck and spine adjustment allows for fluidity of movement and takes pressure off the spinal cord and nerve roots. This optimizes organ and vascular function. Also, regular exercise increases lymphatic drainage and decreases toxic and metabolic load

The last thing I want to recommend is a good ol' Epsom salt bath. Pick up a large bag at your local seed and feed store, add at least four cups to a standard size bath tub of hot water, and soak. The magnesium sulfate will greatly reduce muscle spasm and draw out metabolic waste. It's like having a spa in the privacy of your own home, without the high price and snooty receptionist.

Car and bike accidents can be traumatic to the body, mind and even the spirit. An important part of staying healthy is allowing your body to heal. Be safe. Drive with courtesy and respect. Wear your bike helmet. Take care of your body so you can live without pain and feel good in your own skin. And avoid reality television.