

## 9. FAILING TO FOLLOW TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO DEPRESSION OR ANXIETY

Often pain and/or disability can trigger depression and anxiety. Psychological conditions like depression and anxiety are just as real as broken bones. They cannot be overcome without appropriate treatment. A person who causes another person physical injury is also responsible for resulting psychological conditions. Insurance companies and juries usually only compensate victims of injury-related depression and anxiety if those conditions are properly diagnosed and treated by medical professionals. In other words, if you don't seek treatment for your injury-related depression or anxiety, you will not likely be compensated for it.

## 10. FAILING TO KEEP A FILE

It is important that your attorney knows every medical provider who treats you after an injury. It is also important for you to keep track of all doctor orders, treatment referrals and/or work restrictions. Keeping a file of all materials provided to you by health care providers and insurance companies will ensure that you can provide all necessary information to your attorney at the appropriate time.

### DISCLAIMER:

This guide, which is based upon Iowa law, is designed to inform and not to advise. No person should ever apply or interpret any law without the aid of a trained lawyer who knows the facts because the facts may change the application of the law. For more information on your legal rights, contact our firm at 1-888-546-6529.



425 Second Street SE • Suite 1140  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa • Toll-Free: 1-888-546-6529



Pressley Henningsen John Riccolo Tim Semelroth

*For more useful and practical information for injured Iowans, look online at*

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[www.IowaWorkInjuryFacts.com](http://www.IowaWorkInjuryFacts.com)

[www.IowaMalpracticeFacts.com](http://www.IowaMalpracticeFacts.com)

[www.IowaNursingHomeAbuseFacts.com](http://www.IowaNursingHomeAbuseFacts.com)

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# 10 Mistakes People Make

## *When Dealing with Doctors After an Injury*

By Tim Semelroth and Pressley Henningsen

*The Authors of:*

The Legal Insider's Guide to Iowa Car Accident Claims  
The Legal Insider's Guide to Iowa Workers' Compensation Claims  
The Legal Insider's Guide to Iowa Medical Malpractice Claims  
The Legal Insider's Guide to Iowa Nursing Home Abuse Claims



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### **1. FAILING TO SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION AFTER AN ACCIDENT**

The injured person is always responsible for proving that he or she was injured in a particular accident. Insurance companies and juries often believe that if you aren't hurt badly enough to seek immediate medical attention, you aren't hurt badly enough to deserve compensation. Don't ignore signs of pain, even small ones. See a doctor as soon as possible, as minor pain can often get worse.

### **2. FAILING TO FULLY REVEAL YOUR HEALTH HISTORY AND HABITS TO YOUR DOCTOR**

A health care provider will usually ask if you had any injury or sickness before your current problem. It is important to be honest when answering this type of question. Doctors use your past medical history to diagnose and treat you. Providing incomplete information can impact the quality of the medical care you receive. Concealing prior injury or sickness from your doctor will also hurt your legal case. If you provide your doctors with incomplete information, their medical opinions could be rejected by insurance companies and juries.

### **3. TALKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT LAWSUITS OR LAWYERS**

A doctor's job is to focus on your medical condition. In order to do that job, a doctor does not have to know about your attorney or a lawsuit. Sharing your legal issues or concerns with a medical care provider should be unnecessary. Most doctors do

not want to be involved in a lawsuit. If you tell a doctor he or she is treating an injury that is the subject of a lawsuit, it could impact the doctor's willingness to provide treatment or reach important conclusions about your condition.

### **4. MISSING OR SHOWING UP LATE FOR MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS**

Insurance companies and juries get to see your medical records. When you skip a medical appointment, your record just says "DNS" which means did not show. Excuses – not matter how valid – usually do not make it into the record. More than one or two "DNS" could make it look like you were not committed to getting better. Skipping medical appointments or showing up late could also irritate your doctor. Irritated doctors do not make good witnesses for their patients.

### **5. FAILING TO GET YOUR PAIN ACCURATELY DOCUMENTED IN YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS**

Insurance companies and juries will not believe that you are in pain just because you say so. They need to read about your pain in your medical records. When insurance companies and juries review your records, they will be looking to see how soon you reported pain after an accident and how consistently you continued to report that pain to your doctors.

### **6. FAILING TO TELL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOUR INJURY IS AFFECTING YOUR ABILITY TO WORK**

Insurance companies and juries will not believe that your injury affects your ability to work just because

you say so. If your injury is affecting your ability to work, it is important to mention such a problem to your health care provider. Work problems caused by injury may be treatable and they should be noted in your medical records.

### **7. FAILING TO TAKE MEDICATIONS AS PRESCRIBED**

There is a reason why doctors prescribe a particular type of medication for a particular time period. You should follow your doctor's recommendation until your doctor tells you something different. If you think a medication is making your muscles ache or your stomach hurt, say so; side effects are not rare, and your doctor can usually switch you to another drug. Don't put yourself in position where you have to admit that you chose not to follow your doctor's advice.

### **8. STOPPING MEDICAL TREATMENT TOO SOON**

Insurance companies and juries often believe if a person stops seeking medical treatment for an injury, the injury must be healed. They also believe that significant gaps between treatments suggest that you healed from one injury and must have suffered a new one unrelated to the first. If you have an injury that is affecting your ability to function, you should seek medical treatment until you are healed or until a doctor tells you that there is nothing more that can be done to improve your condition. If you are still suffering and your doctor tells you to "come back as needed" or "call me if you have any problems", you should ask how long you should wait to call if you continue to have the same level of pain and disability.