

About Your Ambulance Call

09/09

Your MedStar ambulance crew is providing this brochure because we are concerned about your health and safety. Please review this guide for information and advice regarding your condition or injury.

The assessment and treatment given to you may not provide all of the medical care required for your condition. Additional treatment at a hospital or by a doctor may be necessary to ensure your health and recovery. Get needed medical attention as soon as possible.

The advice and instructions contained in this brochure are not a substitute for definitive and comprehensive treatment. When needed, we encourage you to seek additional help by contacting your doctor or medical facility, going to the emergency room or contacting the ambulance again by calling 9-1-1.

If appropriate, inform your doctor that MedStar was called and provide the information the ambulance crew recorded on this brochure.

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Notes by crew:

Seatbelt / Airbag Injuries



Managing Care After Injury or Illness



Seat Belt and Airbag Injuries

Your use of seat belts and shoulder straps or action of your vehicle's airbag may have prevented a serious injury. However, serious injuries are not always immediately obvious. Even if serious injury was prevented, there are lesser injuries associated with these safety devices to be aware of and watch for over the next few days.

What To Watch For

Seat Belt Injuries

Compression of the organs and bony structure under the seat belt can cause internal injuries not noticed immediately after the accident. For rear seat passengers or larger children where a lap belt was the only restraint used, watch for injuries caused by the head or torso being thrust forward or sideways. **Signs and symptoms of concern include:**

- Blood in urine or stool, or any changes in ability to urinate or move the bowels
- Dizziness, weakness, or skin that appears pale or wet may be symptoms of shock caused by bleeding from internal injuries.
- Coughing up or vomiting traces of blood
- Pain, tenderness, swelling or bruising in the belly area or lower back
- Weakness in one or both legs may be due to injuries in the abdomen, to the lower back, or nerves in the spine. Injuries to the head and neck are possible if a lap belt was the only device used.

Shoulder Strap Injuries

Muscle strains and bruising can occur in the areas of the body under the strap. You may develop discoloration or swelling following the path of the strap across your chest and neck. This discoloration should clear over time.

Signs and symptoms of concern include:

- Difficult or painful breathing, chest pain or back pain can be signs of injury to the lungs, heart or the large vessels in the chest.
- The neck may also have been subjected to a whiplash type motion due to the strap holding the chest in place but not the head - watch for increases in pain or stiffness to the neck.

Airbag Injuries

These devices deploy forcefully and quickly at a rate of around 200 miles per hour. Your face, neck and arms may have scrapes, fabric rub burns, or bruises where the airbag impacted. The powder from the airbag is cornstarch based and can easily be brushed or washed off.

Signs and symptoms of concern include:

- Changes in vision or pain to the surface of the eye
- Any signs that a head injury or concussion has occurred - see the Head Injury brochure
- Increasingly difficult or painful breathing or chest and back pain
- Constant or increasing pain, stiffness, or immobility in the neck or arms