The “Hidden” Pain Behind Airbag Injuries

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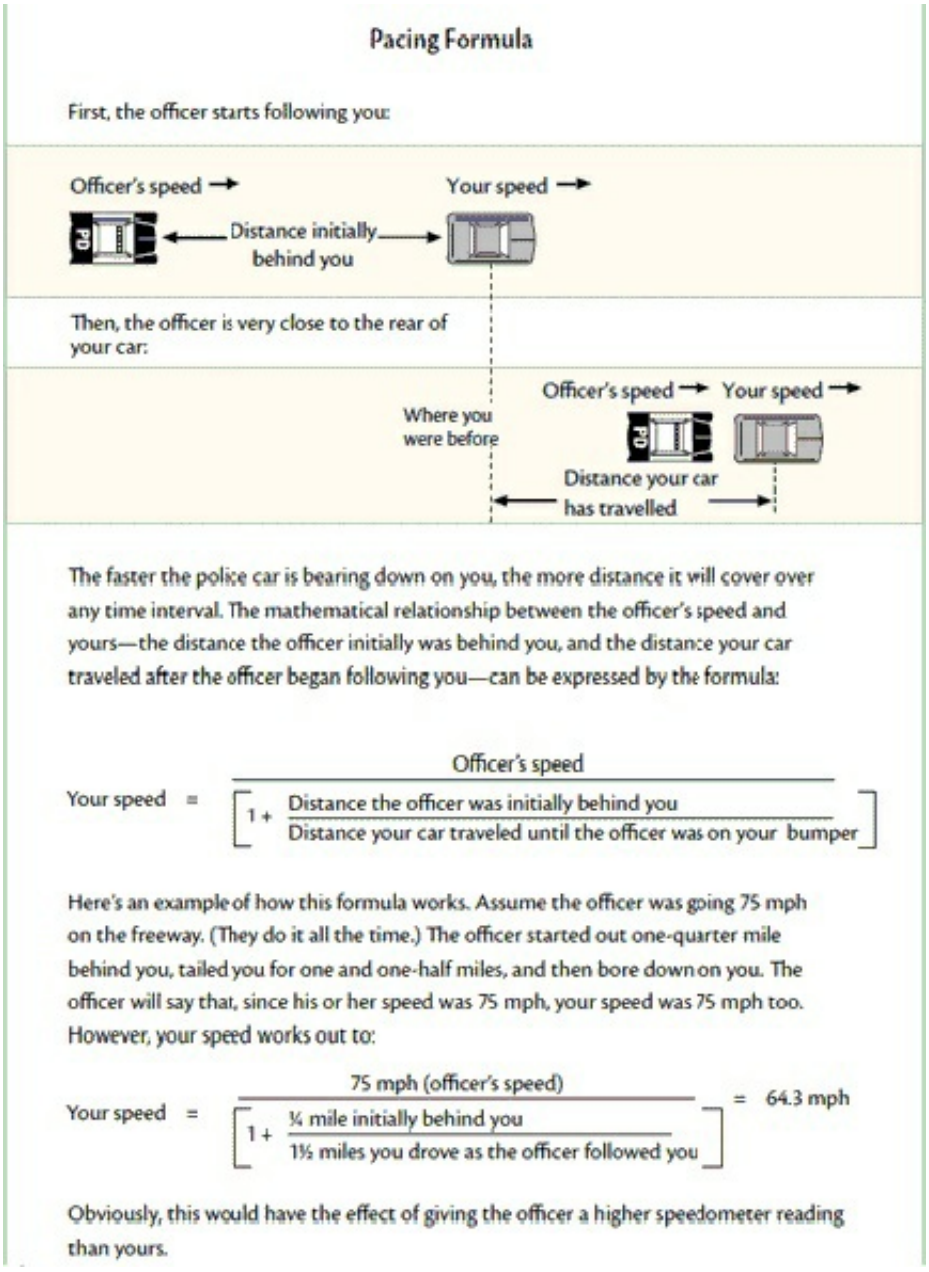
Airbags and seatbelts can save lives, but that doesn’t mean they aren’t without their own risks. When an airbag deploys, that is often a signifier of a very serious crash. Airbags are released at a very high rate of speed, and they are often accompanied by the “**sound of a gunshot**.”

When an airbag is released, heat, chemicals, gases, and dust are also released. This can cause an array of problems, especially when the crash is actually a low-impact incident.

Airbag injuries are often lumped together with the injuries from the accident as a whole. That means that if you have a valid personal injury claim, then you can likely recover from any injuries that the airbag caused as well.

If you are hurt in a car accident then find out more information about your case with a west palm beach personal injury attorney.



How Do Airbags Work?

Airbags are made of a stretchable fabric or other materials, and they are packed tightly together throughout your vehicle. Most people realize that they have airbags in the front dashboard, but side airbags are becoming more common as well.

If there is an accident, the airbags quickly fill up with air to provide a cushion between you and the hard objects in your vehicle, like the steering wheel.

The airbags only start to fill up when the crash sensors tell them to do so. These small electronic

components are supposed to “**sense**” when the vehicle has sustained damage and immediately trigger the airbag release.

The sensor will look to actions like sudden stopping, increased pressure, and other signifiers. Another set of sensors will measure brake pressure, wheel speed, and seat occupants’ status to help determine when the airbag should be released.

Once the sensor is triggered, the inflator sets off a chemical reaction that results in an explosion of nitrogen gas. This gas fills up the airbag, and as it fills, it bursts through its container to provide cushion to the vehicle occupants. This happens very quickly—within 25 to 50 milliseconds. That is almost 200 miles per hour!

Learn more about the different types of airbags and how they work here.

Injuries that Result from Airbags

Some of the most common injuries from airbags are relatively minor. They include:

- Scrapes or cuts
- Fabric rub injuries
- Bruises where the airbag impacted

The powder that comes out with the airbag should not cause any injuries generally, but it could be a problem if it gets into your eyes. Dust it off and rinse out your eyes when you can.

Other injuries that airbags cause can be much more serious, and they are difficult to detect in some situations. Cardiac injuries can be the result of an airbag deployment, especially in situations where the driver or passenger is not wearing a seatbelt. They are even more common in slower-speed accidents.

The types of cardiac injuries that are of concern include:

- Aortic transection
- Tricuspid-valve injury
- Right atrial rupture
- Cardiac contusion
- MI
- Aortic-valve avulsion

- Cardiac tamponade
- Hemopericardium

These injuries are more common in slower crashes because the individual is not as far away from the airbag as they would in a higher-speed accident. If you sit closer than 10 inches from where an airbag will deploy, then that can cause increased injuries.

If you cannot sit further away than ten inches (young children or shorter individuals), then you may want to actually turn off your airbags because they could cause more damage than help in a crash. You can learn more here.

Cardiac injuries are very difficult to detect after an accident because of the incidence of other injuries. Signs of these more serious injuries include:

- Difficulty breathing or painful breathing
- Chest pain
- Back pain

These "**hidden**" injuries are another reason that it is important to seek medical attention after a car accident.

Clearing the "Air" with a West Palm Beach Personal Injury Attorney

When we think of car accidents, we don't always think about the injuries that can be caused by an airbag. In fact, they are more common than one might think. But the fact of the matter is that airbag injuries are taken into consideration in a personal injury case, just like the injuries sustained from the accident itself.

Find out more about how a West Palm Beach personal injury attorney can get your life back on track.