

Knee, Leg Injuries Reduce Both Mobility and Quality of Life

While not life-threatening, knee injuries *are* some of the most painful injuries a victim can sustain. Knee injuries can happen anywhere: work, hit-and-run accidents, and falls on improperly maintained sidewalks. After sustaining an injury to the knee, a victim can find themselves lacking the mobility they once had. This lack of mobility and the impairment any type of leg injury can cause a victim can reduce their quality of life, leaving them wheelchair bound or on crutches. Victims become unable to enjoy their former hobbies and perform their jobs, the latter resulting in lost wages and medical expenses they can't afford.

The result of a knee or leg injury and its implications can force a victim off their feet and out of work for long periods of time, especially if the injury requires surgery such as an Arthroscopy or in extreme cases Total Knee Replacement (in personal injury, sometimes referred to as "TKR"). Recovering after a Total Knee Replacement surgery is a lengthy, multi-step process that doesn't end when the surgeon leaves the OR. In fact, it can be months or even years before an accident victim can return to the full life they were living before they become injured.

Within this article, we'll seek to explain the seriousness of knee and leg injuries and how they can gravely affect the quality of life for a victim of an accident. We'll also provide a clear picture of how Personal Injury attorneys handle knee injury claims on behalf of their clients. In the last few years, laws regulating how slip and fall injuries are upheld in a court of law have changed dramatically, and it's important to understand how that can affect those injured today and in the future.

After the injury

When one sustains a knee injury, the first thing they often do is seek medical attention, especially if the injury is causing extreme pain, or they find they cannot move the affected limb. In severe cases, the extent of the injury is so bad that they're transported to the ER in an ambulance, where they can receive immediate medical attention. This is true for injuries in which the knee or kneecap becomes broken, shattered, or dislocated. In such cases the victim will not be able to walk or bear weight on the knee. Under these circumstances, the treating physician may suggest surgery either on an emergency basis or scheduled as soon as possible.

Following immediate medical attention after an accident, such as relocating a dislocated kneecap or stabilizing fractured bones, there may be more extensive medical attention that need be provided.

Some of the most common medical interventions for those being treated for knee pain and injury:

- **Arthroscopic surgery:** this surgical procedure can be used to both diagnose and treat a knee injury in a single surgery. This type of surgical intervention is used as a first line surgery before a surgeon knows if a Total Knee Replacement will be required down the road. During an Arthroscopic knee surgery, the surgeon can visualize the inside of the knee using minimally invasive technology. The recovery for this kind of surgery is usually minimal and will be followed by physical therapy.
- **Imaging of the affected limb:** an orthopedic surgeon will use MRI or CT scan as a way to closely monitor the injured limb and note any changes to the structure of the knee. Structural changes can range from loss of cartilage to bone loss, depending on the extent of the injury.
- **Bracing and stabilization of the joint:** while a patient is awaiting a surgery date, the physician may recommend they wear a brace or stabilizer on the injured knee to prevent further injury. These braces can either be bought in stores or can be custom made by an orthotics company specifically for the patient.
- **Physical therapy:** physical therapy can be used to treat the patient's injury before and after surgery. If the injury will not be worsened by physical therapy, the physician may recommend the patient go for several sessions and then reassess the injury to further make their decision on what should be done next.
- **Total Knee Replacement:** this is the most extreme, and last surgical intervention used to treat a patient with a severe knee injury. When less invasive procedures such as Arthroscopy (and Partial Knee Replacement) fail to provide the patient with either pain relief or the ability to bear weight on the knee, an orthopedic surgeon will remove the knee joint and replace it. This is considered major surgery with an extended recovery time. Physical therapy will follow when the patient is cleared to bear weight on the knee again. They will continue to follow up with the orthopedic surgeon for an indefinite amount of time thereafter.

As with any injury that requires a surgical intervention, there are risk factors involved, as well as complications that could arise due to unforeseen circumstances.

- Excessive bleeding
- Blood clot in the knee or in the leg that could require further invention
- Infection
- Stiffness of the joint post-op
- Damage to the surrounding structures such as bones or cartilage of the knee

A personal injury attorney on your side

Whether a person sustains an injury in our out of work, a Personal Injury attorney can be a priceless asset to have on their side. In the event they were injured by the negligence of

another, those careless actions resulted in both physical pain and suffering and financial losses for the victim ("plaintiff"). While compensation isn't the entire picture, anyone whose been injured in an accident can attest to the fact that it does ease the burden of medical expenses and lost wages incurred as a result of an accident for which they were not at-fault. A Personal Injury attorney has dedicated their entire career to the aggressive pursuit of justice on behalf of those who have suffered the consequences of someone else's carelessness. When victims are unable to fight for themselves, it's the Personal Injury attorney that protects their right to damages.

Under the law, a dollar amount matters

While those who become injured may feel it insulting that there's a "price tag" put on their injury (especially if the number is lower than what they may have had in mind before retaining legal counsel to advise them properly), it's a necessary evil. In order to rule on the compensation, the injured party deserves as a result of their accident, it's important for their board certified Personal Injury attorney to do their due diligence to the case. With ever-changing laws surrounding slip-and-fall related claims, it's imperative that the attorney has continued to educate themselves about the laws within the state they practice.

To estimate the damages on a knee injury claim, the court will look at several factors:

Concrete damages: these are damages that are obvious to a judge and jury. These damages can include medical bills and lost wages. The amount of these damages can be easily furnished and therefore the victim can be compensated accordingly for this portion of their accident.

Subjective damages: damages that cannot be easily furnished on paper with a dollar amount are not as easy to predict. These damages can include "pain and suffering" that the victim experienced after the accident. Pain and suffering usually includes: physical pain, mental anguish, and PTSD from the trauma caused by the accident (this is a major factor in hit-and-run accidents for pedestrians).

The judge and jury will also take into consideration whether or not the plaintiff had any prior injuries to the affected limb that could account for the extent of the current injury. Usually, anything prior would not result in the physical pain and suffering the victim feels currently. This is something a defendant's legal team and the insurance company will attempt to argue against in order to dispel the need for damages paid to the victim. Insurance companies are known for using this deceitful tactic to try and convince a victim they're not entitled to any compensation, when in fact they are rightfully deserving.

Expert testimony from the physician who treats the patient can quickly and thoroughly prove that the victim is suffering greatly and deserves to be fully compensated.

Contact us to schedule a complimentary consultation. There's no obligation. Take the first step and call today: (877). 529-0080

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