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September 2024
Special Newsletter
for Attorneys

This Month's Question:

Is There a Relationship Between Trauma and Appendicitis?

GO MD Review Answer:

We were recently asked to consult on the following case. The client is a 23-year-old woman who was traveling in the far right-hand lane of traffic. A driver in the middle lane made an illegal right-hand turn from the middle lane and crossed in front of the client's car. The client's car broad-sided the car, making the illegal right-hand turn. The client's airbag did not deploy as it should have. The client was thrown across the steering wheel, hitting her head, chest, and abdomen.

The client experienced neck and lower back pain; however, they did not seek out immediate medical care and went home. Approximately six hours after the accident, the client began to experience right lower quadrant abdominal pain and went to the ER, where she was diagnosed with acute appendicitis. The client was hospitalized and had an appendectomy. The attorney asked us if the acute appendicitis and the accident were related. There are articles in the medical literature describing acute appendicitis after blunt force trauma to the abdomen, including cases caused by auto accidents. It was our opinion that either due to the lap and shoulder restraints, the steering wheel, or both, the client experienced blunt force trauma to her abdomen during the auto crash. It was our further opinion that due to the blunt force trauma, the client developed acute appendicitis. The literature supports the conclusion that blunt-force trauma can lead to acute appendicitis. One article states, "Our experience with three cases of AA (acute appendicitis-our addition) following blunt force trauma led to an extensive review of the world literature on the subject. We believe that abdominal trauma might be causative of AA." There were several other medical journal articles supporting our opinion.

The literature describes this phenomenon as more common in children and young adults. The literature reports the diagnosis of acute appendicitis must be considered following direct abdominal trauma, especially if the patient complains of abdominal right lower quadrant pain, nausea, and anorexia, which were this client's symptoms.

It was our opinion that there was a direct temporal relationship between the auto accident and the client's acute appendicitis, and the auto crash was the immediate & proximate cause of this client's acute appendicitis.

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*** Assessment of Case Validity and Value**

- * Determination of Future Medical Care**
- * Assistance with Strategies to Promote Medical Theories & Causation**
- * Medical Summary Reports for Settlement Letters**
- * Medical Research and Delivery of Medical Journal Articles**
- * Answering Specific Medical Questions**
- * Interpretation of Meaning, or lack thereof, of Medical Reports & Records**
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- * Deposition & Trial Question Preparation**
- * Facilitation of Communication with Clients, Families & Professionals**
- * IME Observation & IME Rebuttal Reports**

Best regards,

Joe Schifilliti MD, MJ

P.S.---Please reply if you have a case to discuss!

P.P.S. ---If you found this newsletter helpful, please reply with: Yes

P.P.P.S.---I thank my friend John V for the image used. To learn more, visit <https://www.johnsastrophotos.com/>