

# Hidden Injuries: When Arm Pain Signals More Than a Simple Strain

## Understanding arm pain after a car accident

Arm pain following a car accident may seem like a minor issue, but it can often signal serious underlying injuries that could impact your long-term health and financial stability. An injury to your elbow, wrist, bicep, or other areas of the upper limb is not just a temporary discomfort—it could be a sign of something much more severe.

Understanding the complexities of arm injuries after a Pennsylvania car accident is crucial, especially when it comes to seeking compensation. From the challenges of getting an accurate diagnosis to the ongoing need for medical treatment, knowing the specifics of your injury can make all the difference. Without this knowledge, you risk accepting a lowball settlement that falls far short of covering your recovery needs and maintaining your quality of life.

If you've experienced arm pain after a car accident in Pittsburgh, it's essential to be aware of your legal rights. Consulting with a [Pittsburgh car accident lawyer](#) can help ensure that you receive the full compensation you deserve. A skilled attorney can guide you through the legal process, advocate on your behalf, and fight to protect your financial and physical well-being after a serious injury.

## Serious injuries underlying arm pain after a crash

In the immediate aftermath of a car accident, arm pain might not seem like a top concern. However, what starts as a dull ache can quickly escalate into a more severe condition.

While an emergency room visit is essential immediately after an accident, many underlying arm injuries require evaluation by a specialist, such as an orthopedic surgeon, neurologist, or vascular surgeon. These professionals can provide a more detailed diagnosis and treatment plan.

Common [injuries](#) causing arm pain after a car accident include:

### Brachial Plexus Injuries

The brachial plexus is a network of nerves that sends signals from your spine to your shoulder, arm, and hand. Damage to this area can lead to loss of function, severe pain, and even paralysis. These injuries often require specialized medical attention and long-term care.

### Compartment Syndrome

This is a surgical emergency in which increased pressure within one of the body's compartments (like the forearm) restricts blood flow, leading to muscle and nerve damage. The

symptoms might start as mere pain but can quickly progress to numbness and decreased motion. Without timely intervention, they can lead to permanent damage.

### **Tendinopathy**

Repetitive strain or sudden trauma during a car accident can cause tendons in the arm to become inflamed or even tear. Unlike a simple strain, tendinopathy requires a longer recovery period and can lead to chronic issues if not treated appropriately.

### **Rotator Cuff Tears**

The rotator cuff consists of muscles and tendons that stabilize the shoulder. The force of a car accident can cause these tendons to tear, leading to severe pain, weakness, and a limited range of motion. Surgical repair is often required for significant tears, followed by extensive rehabilitation.

### **Ulnar Nerve Entrapment**

The ulnar nerve runs along the inner side of your arm and controls sensation in your ring and pinky fingers. Trauma from a car accident can compress or damage this nerve, causing numbness, tingling, and weakness in the hand. In severe cases, surgery may be needed to relieve pressure on the nerve.

### **Clavicle Fractures**

The clavicle, or collarbone, is prone to breaking during a car accident, especially in high-impact collisions. A fractured clavicle can lead to shoulder deformity, loss of arm strength, and chronic pain. Treatment often involves immobilization and, in some cases, surgical intervention to realign the bone.

### **Shoulder Dislocations**

High-impact collisions can cause the shoulder to dislocate, where the upper arm bone pops out of the shoulder socket. This injury can lead to instability and an increased risk of future dislocations. Immediate medical attention is crucial to reduce the dislocation and prevent long-term damage.

### **Median Nerve Injury**

The median nerve runs down the arm and into the hand, controlling thumb movement and sensation in the palm. Car accidents can damage this nerve, leading to conditions like carpal tunnel syndrome. Symptoms include pain, numbness, and difficulty grasping objects. Treatment may involve physical therapy, medications, or surgery.

## Myositis Ossificans

This condition occurs when bone tissue forms inside a muscle after a traumatic injury, such as from a car accident. The result is pain, swelling, and stiffness in the affected muscle, often requiring surgical removal of the bone growth for full recovery.

Advanced imaging techniques such as MRIs or nerve conduction studies are often essential for correctly diagnosing these complex injuries. Timely diagnosis following a car accident is crucial, as early intervention can significantly impact recovery.

## The true cost of arm injuries

The financial implications of arm injuries after a car accident are often underestimated. Beyond the immediate costs of medical care, hidden expenses can accumulate over time.

Understanding the full scope of potential financial losses is critical when negotiating a settlement. A well-documented claim should include immediate medical costs and projections of future expenses and loss of income.

All of these factors should be considered when pursuing compensation for an arm injury sustained in a crash:

- **Ongoing Medical Treatment.** Arm injuries like tendinopathy or brachial plexus injuries often require extended treatment plans, including multiple sessions of physical therapy, specialist consultations, and possibly surgeries. Each [physical therapy](#) session can cost between \$75 to \$150, specialist visits might range from \$200 to \$500 per appointment, and surgeries can run into thousands of dollars, depending on the complexity of the procedure. These costs are typically long-term, with physical therapy and follow-up appointments potentially lasting for months or even years.
- **Lost Earning Capacity.** Severe arm injuries can result in partial or complete disability, especially in jobs requiring manual labor. If you are unable to return to your previous role, you may need to accept a lower-paying position or stop working altogether. This reduction in earning potential can represent a significant long-term financial loss. Over a lifetime, this could amount to tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars, particularly if the injury leads to chronic pain or permanent disability.
- **Out-of-Pocket Costs.** Recovery from arm injuries often comes with a range of additional expenses, such as adaptive devices like braces or ergonomic tools, which can cost anywhere from \$50 to \$500. Medications, particularly for pain management, can cost hundreds of dollars monthly, especially if ongoing. In-home care services, which may be necessary if the injury limits mobility, can cost between \$15 to \$25 per hour, leading to significant expenses if required long-term. These are chronic expenses that can persist as long as the injury affects daily living.

- **Rehabilitation and Vocational Training.** If the injury prevents you from returning to your previous job, you might need vocational training to transition to a new career. Rehabilitation programs can cost thousands of dollars, and the time spent retraining could result in lost income, adding to the overall financial burden.
- **Future Medical Costs.** Chronic arm conditions may require future surgeries or long-term pain management strategies. These future costs need to be accounted for in any settlement negotiation, as they can be substantial. For example, repeat surgeries might be necessary, costing anywhere from \$5,000 to \$20,000, and ongoing pain management could lead to expenses of \$1,000 or more per year.

By thoroughly documenting and projecting these potential costs, a lawyer ensures that a settlement accounts for both immediate and long-term financial impacts, providing a more comprehensive view of the compensation needed. That's why you need [a lawyer who understands](#) the medical nuances and can anticipate the long-term effects of your injury.

### **Get maximum compensation for your arm injury claim**

Arm pain after a car accident can be a sign of serious, life-altering injuries that require not only immediate medical attention but also a strategic legal approach.

Working with an experienced Pennsylvania car accident lawyer at [Romanow Law Group](#) in Pittsburgh means you have a professional who is aggressively fighting for the compensation and justice you deserve.

If you were injured in a Pittsburgh car accident, contact us for a [free case evaluation](#) to learn more about your legal options and the full value of your claim.