**Title:** What If Peyton Manning Never Plays Again? The Sports Law Perspective

**Subtitle:** As his brother prepares to take the field in the Super Bowl this Sunday, questions about Peyton Manning have taken center stage. NFL sources are saying that Manning has suffered a setback in his rehabilitation and may never play again.

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**Date:** 0-2-2012

**Author:** Anthony R. Caruso

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According to Yahoo.com, while Manning’s neck has healed, the velocity on his passes has not improved, and possibly never will. If the rumors are true, this is clearly devastating news for Manning, the Indianapolis Colts organization, and their fans.

From the perspective of a sports law attorney, the development also gives rise to a host of legal issues. As it stands now, Manning is scheduled to receive a $28 million roster bonus on March 8 of this year.

Up to this point, Manning has indicated that he is unwilling to restructure his contract. Meanwhile, Indianapolis Colts owner, Jim Irsay, has stated that the team will not seek to trade Manning and, if ready, he would start at QB next year.

However, if he is not healthy, this leaves the Colts with only one option—cut Manning.

Following reports of rifts between Irsay and Manning last week, the two sides released a joint statement, pledging to work together going forward. However, given the increasing likelihood that Manning may never be healthy enough to play, both sides may have to reconsider their options.

So what’s next? First, the Colts should start looking for a new quarterback. As for Manning, if he is cut, he could sign with another team. Even with his health status in limbo, there are several teams that may be willing to take the gamble. Should he be forced to retire, I am sure that many lucrative television offers will also come his way.

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