

“My Pain Started Days After the Accident — Should I Be Worried?”

Addie’s Framing Principle:

It’s very common for people to feel “okay” right after a car accident and then begin experiencing pain or symptoms days later. This does not automatically mean something is seriously wrong — but it **should not be ignored**.

Delayed Pain After a Car Accident Is Common

After an auto accident, adrenaline and shock can temporarily mask pain. As those effects wear off, symptoms may appear or worsen **hours or even days later**.

Common delayed symptoms include:

- Neck or back pain
- Stiffness or reduced range of motion
- Headaches or migraines
- Shoulder or joint pain
- Numbness or tingling
- Muscle spasms
- Dizziness or fatigue

Soft tissue injuries, inflammation, and some disc or nerve injuries often take time to become noticeable.

Why It’s Important to Get Checked — Even If Pain Wasn’t Immediate

It is typically recommended to see a **personal injury doctor** after an accident, even if you don’t feel immediate pain.

A post-accident medical evaluation can:

- Identify injuries that are not immediately obvious

- Create early medical documentation
- Help prevent minor injuries from worsening
- Establish a baseline for recovery

Waiting too long can allow injuries to progress and may complicate both recovery and insurance claims.

If Pain or Symptoms Appear Days Later

If new pain or symptoms develop after the accident:

1. **Seek medical care as soon as possible**
2. **Do not ignore or “push through” the pain**
3. **Tell the medical provider** about the accident and when symptoms began
4. **Notify your attorney right away** if you have one

Prompt action helps protect both your health and your rights.

When It May Be an Emergency

If you experience **severe or worsening symptoms**, such as:

- Intense or uncontrollable pain
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of consciousness
- Sudden weakness, numbness, or confusion
- Severe headache or vision changes

You should **call 911 or seek emergency medical care immediately**.

Addie's Reassuring, Practical Message

Addie should normalize delayed symptoms while encouraging responsible action:

Core Addie Language Template:

“Yes — it’s actually very common for pain to show up days after a car accident. Adrenaline can mask symptoms at first. That’s why it’s usually a good idea to get checked by a personal injury doctor after an accident, even if you felt okay initially. If new pain appears, get medical care and let your attorney know right away. And if the pain is severe or feels like an emergency, call 911.”

Internal Guidance for Addie (Not User-Facing)

- Validate the concern without minimizing it
- Avoid diagnosing specific injuries
- Emphasize medical evaluation, not self-assessment
- Escalate emergency-level symptoms immediately
- Reinforce communication with counsel when applicable