

The following are some questions you should ask your insurance company before settling any claim.

**1. If I hire an attorney, would I likely receive more money in my settlement?**

Answer: If the adjuster says “no”. This is likely false. According to a study titled “Paying for Auto Injuries” conducted by the Insurance Research Council, claims with attorney representation in injury cases settled for 40 percent more than without legal representation. Insurance companies are aware of this study and will attempt to dissuade people from seeking legal representation for their claim.

**2. Can the insurance company insure that my settlement is reasonable and fair?**

Answer: They cannot and will not make this guarantee. The insurance company may know the typical claim payout for your particular situation, but they are in the business of making money and will not disclose this information to you. Unless you are a professional trained at making settlements, you risk accepting a settlement that is much less than what you deserve for your type of claim.

**3. Why is my conversation with the insurance adjuster recorded even though the information is in the police report?**

Answer: Insurance companies will use your statements against you. Your statement can be used to lower or deny your claim. Some companies require a statement as part of the claim process. Make sure you understand this process before giving any recorded statement.

**4. Why does the insurance company require a unrestricted medical authorization to settle a claim?**

Answer: Insurance companies want access to your medical history to fish for information that can be used against you in regards to your claim. Be careful of their written release agreement as they may be very broad and allow contact with your doctors and records even if they do not directly pertain to your injury. You should speak with your attorney before you sign any medical record release form.

**5. Should I wait until my medical treatment is complete before I settle?**

Answer: Yes, you should, but some insurance companies may tell you otherwise. Insurance companies know that the faster a claim is settled, the less they pay. If you settle a case before you are sure of your damages, you risk the possibility of an insufficient settlement that may not cover your needs. Once a case is settled, it cannot be reopened.

**6. Ask the insurance company for a copy of the insured's insurance policy.**

Answer: Insurance companies will hide the policy limits of their insured. Although they are required to release this information once a lawsuit is filed.

**7. Has the insurance company done any credit information check on you?**

Answer: Some insurance companies obtain your credit information to know how much you owe , to whom and when the next payment is due. They may leverage this against you for a quick settlement in their favor.

Insurance companies have a tremendous advantage over you. It is imperative that you ask these important questions before you sign anything. The biggest mistake someone can make is to believe that they can take advantage of an insurance company. Please remember that the insurance company have their own legal team. You deserve the same!