

A GUIDE TO YOUR MEDICO-LEGAL CASE

Who are Premier Medical?

We are a MedCo Accredited Tier 1 medico-legal agency selected by you (or other party you have instructed) to arrange an appointment with an expert who will produce an independent and unbiased report.

We will endeavour to help you through obtaining your medical report, but we cannot give advice regarding your claim.

What are Soft Tissue Injuries?

In this document we refer to “Soft-Tissue Injuries” a lot. This type of injury comprises whiplash, muscle strains, cuts, bruises, and minor fractures. Soft Tissue injuries are managed to standards set out by MedCo, and you may have started a soft tissue injury claim coming through the Official Injury Claims Portal.

What is the expert’s role?

The expert is independent and has a duty to the court to provide an independent opinion so you may not feel as engaged as you might with your own doctor. The expert can only report on issues related to your accident presented at or before the examination and will not provide or prescribe treatment or medication. The expert may though recommend treatment or further assessment if your injuries are outside his or her scope of expertise.

Can I have a video appointment?

In many instances, video assessment is not appropriate, as the doctor needs to undertake a physical examination. However if your injuries are primarily soft-tissue and your claim has come through the Official Injury Claims Portal it is likely to fall within the standards defined by MedCo who will permit Video Assessment provided you give us your consent. Similarly, as we begin to come out of lockdown we are required to gain your consent to attend a face-to-face appointment. For further guidance, please refer to: <https://www.premiermedical.co.uk/claimant>

Injuries which fall outside of MedCo can proceed by video where all parties agree it is appropriate.

When will I get my appointment?

For a report on soft-tissue injuries (such as whiplash, sprains, cuts and bruises), we will contact you by phone if possible as soon as we have your consent to discuss your appointment requirements. In most cases, your appointment will be within 4 weeks. For other reports, we may have to await receipt of your medical records before providing an appointment.

How can I prepare for my appointment?

A number of experts like to gather details about the accident prior to the appointment and so we, or they, may ask you to complete a questionnaire. Please plan your journey, including where you will park, and arrive in good time.

How can I help things along?

For cases of soft-tissue injury, we have recently launched a web-app Your Medical, which allows you to

- Change your appointment
- Complete your pre-medical questionnaire
- Update us about any treatments
- Allow access to your medical records
- Find answers to your questions
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Details of this service will be sent to you with your appointment

What happens at my appointment?

For soft-tissue injuries, the appointment will last 10-15 minutes, otherwise an appointment is typically 20-30 minutes. You will be asked for two forms of ID, one of which must be a photo ID. You may bring a friend with you and a chaperone is required for under 18s. The expert may ask probing questions and spend much of their time inputting on a computer. A physical examination may be needed so please wear appropriate clothing. If the expert has any specific requirements then they will inform you directly prior to the appointment.

What will the report say?

The expert can only report on symptoms and history presented at or before the appointment and the report will provide their opinion as to whether the accident was the cause of your suffering and a prognosis (expected recovery period). The expert may recommend tests, further treatment or reports, which Premier Medical can arrange or direct you to, provided costs have been agreed with the compensator.

What if I disagree with the report?

If there are factual errors in the report or the doctor has missed something important that you told him or her, you can return it to us for correction by the expert. This will add perhaps two weeks to finalising your claim, so we would ask that you consider whether the error makes a material difference to your claim before returning it.

If new information becomes available that you want, the expert to consider this will be chargeable and you should agree this with your solicitor or the compensator first.

Will we need Medical Records?

For a soft-tissue case, we are unlikely to need medical records. If we do, we will ask you to complete a Letter of Authority so that we have your permission to obtain them. We will only obtain those records the expert needs to see, but this can take up to 6 weeks.

If you would like more information regarding our custody of your data, please download our privacy notice from <https://www.premiermedical.co.uk/claimants>

If you do not wish to release your records, we (along with the examining expert) may not be able to provide a satisfactorily conclusive report to you or your legal representative nor discharge our duty to the court in respect of your claim.

How can I get help?

Premier Medical is committed to helping you get an independent quality report.

Our staff are trained to support and guide, and are particularly aware of the needs of vulnerable persons. If you have accessibility needs, we can select relevant venues. We can also direct you to local support services, and whilst many of our experts speak other languages, we can put you in touch with interpreters who could attend an appointment with you.

Whilst we primarily use email, text and computers to communicate, please just let us know if you would prefer paper format documents.