

Heart Attack Misdiagnosis Or Failure To Diagnose Lawyer

Written by Bonner Law | SEPTEMBER 15, 2022 | MEDICAL MALPRACTICE

Have you or a loved one experienced heart attack misdiagnosis and need to reach out to a failure to diagnose lawyer? The CDC reports that every year, 805,000 people in the United States have a [heart attack](#), otherwise referred to as a myocardial infarction. According to the CDC, one in five heart attacks is "silent" meaning that the patient does not experience any symptoms. A heart attack can lead to devastating life-long health complications and even death so timely diagnosing and properly treating a heart attack is crucial to the patient's recovery. Unfortunately, hospitals and doctors do not always take the necessary steps to make the diagnosis and provide proper care. If you believe you did not receive a timely diagnosis or proper treatment for your heart attack, you may have a claim for damages. A failure to diagnose lawyer can help you determine if you are entitled to compensation.

Symptoms

Heart attacks can cause a variety of symptoms in addition to pain. Some common symptoms are listed below.

- Chest Pressure
- Jaw Pain
- Neck Pain
- Stomach Pain
- Arm Pain
- Nausea
- Difficulty Breathing
- Sweating

Diagnosis

When a patient arrives in the hospital emergency room with the symptoms of a heart attack, it is crucial that the hospital's nurses and doctors take immediate steps to make the diagnosis and then treat the patient. The first steps towards diagnosing a heart attack and determining its severity are an EKG (Electrocardiogram), a Troponin test, and a physical evaluation. An EKG measures the electrical pulses of the heart. To capture the pulses, a nurse will place wires on the patient's chest with adhesive pads. A heart's pulse consists of a series of waves, including an ST wave (or, ST segment).

- If the patient has suffered a STEMI, the ST segment is elevated. A STEMI is a full blockage of an artery which causes a complete lack of oxygen to the heart.
- If the patient has suffered an NSTEMI, the ST segment is decreased. An NSTEMI is a partial blockage of an artery which causes a reduction of oxygen to the heart.

A Troponin test is a blood test which measures the level of Troponin protein in your blood. Troponin is a protein which is generated by muscle damage. There are two forms of Troponin protein.

- Troponin I (cTnI): This Troponin is exclusively produced by the heart.
- Troponin T (cTnT): This Troponin is produced by other muscles in the body, however low levels can be found in the heart.

Usually there is very little Troponin found in the bloodstream. A normal range of Troponin I is 0-0.04 ng/mL. On the other hand, a normal range of Troponin T is 0-0.01 ng/mL. An elevated level of Troponin, I or T, in the blood is an indication that the patient has likely suffered a heart attack or has damaged their heart. The Troponin test has become the standard in testing a patient with a potential heart attack. The "GRACE Score" (Global Registry of Acute Coronary Events) is used to evaluate a heart attack's severity. GRACE factors include:

- Age
- Heart Rate

- Blood Pressure
- Cardiac History
- EKG ST-Depression or Elevation

Other common, non-invasive diagnostic tests include an echocardiogram, a chest x-ray, a PET scan, an MRI, a stress test, and a myocardial perfusion imaging test (MPI). On average, women are more likely than men to be misdiagnosed after having a heart attack. This leads to delayed, and often, inadequate treatment. If this sounds like your situation, you may need a failure to diagnose lawyer.

Treatment

Treatment should begin no later than 90 minutes after the patient's arrival to the ER. Additionally, the choice in treatment depends on the kind of heart attack the patient has had. Potential treatments include:

- **Reperfusion:** Administration of blood thinners to restore blood flow and, in turn, oxygen in the blood. tPA is a common medication given to patients who are having a heart attack.
- **Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) / Angioplasty:** This is a surgical solution. The goal is to widen the artery and better facilitate blood flow. Many heart attack patients will have a stent put in the affected artery.
- **Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery (CABG):** This is also a surgical treatment. The physician makes an incision in the heart and inserts tubes. The tubes will help blood flow more freely through the blocked artery.

Should I Contact A Failure To Diagnose Lawyer?

A failure to diagnose lawyer can help you with a medical negligence claim. Medical negligence occurs when the medical care provided fell below the standard of care. A doctor, nurse, or hospital can fall below the standard of care at any point during the patient's care, including during diagnosis and treatment. To ensure you are receiving the necessary treatment, The American Heart Association recommends addressing the questions below with [your doctor](#):

- What kind of heart attack did I have?
- Did it damage my heart permanently?
- Why did this happen to me?
- Am I at risk of having another one soon?
- Could you explain the treatments and medicines I'll need?
- Should I worry about how my medicines will interact or side effects?
- How long will I have to stay in the hospital?
- What physical limitations will I have while recovering?
- Will I be able to return to a normal life?
- What is "cardiac rehab"? When can I start?

If you think your medical care providers fell below the standard of care when diagnosing or treating a heart attack, you should contact Bonner Law. Michael P. Bonner has over 30 years of experience in medical malpractice litigation, and he will fight to get you the compensation you deserve. Call 1-800-4MEDMAL for a free consultation.

[Click here](#) to see our blog post about the types of heart attacks (NSTEMI and STEMI) and their symptoms.

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Contact Us

We're available 24/7, weekdays or weekends, in both English and Spanish.

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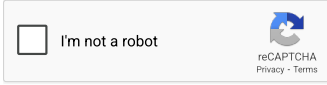
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