



THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS

STANDING UP FOR YOU

An introduction to
claiming compensation:

Spinal injuries

Our pledge to you

Thompsons Solicitors has been standing up for the injured and mistreated since Harry Thompson founded the firm in 1921. We have fought for millions of people, won countless landmark cases and secured key legal reforms.

We have more experience of winning personal injury and employment claims than any other firm – and we use that experience solely for the injured and mistreated.

Thompsons will stand up for you by:

Staying true to our principles – regardless of how difficult our job is made by government, employers or the insurance industry

Remaining committed to the trade union movement, working closely with them and with professional associations for the benefit of working people everywhere

Thompsons pledge that we will:

Work solely for the injured or mistreated

Refuse to represent insurance companies and employers

Invest our specialist expertise in each and every case

Fight for the maximum compensation in the shortest possible time

Be open and transparent about fees and costs

standing up for you

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Mark Cook
Spinal injury client

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Introduction

According to the Spinal Injuries Association, it is estimated that every day in the UK, three people sustain a spinal injury which leaves them permanently disabled.

With no current cure for the condition, the effects of a traumatic spinal injury can change lives in an instant, and victims and their families often require lifelong support.

Thompsons' serious injury team brings together the most dedicated specialist lawyers from every corner of the UK, offering expert help wherever you are.

Whether it's helping you to come to terms with the changes to your lifestyle and the financial impact of a spinal injury, or ensuring that you access the best medical care and regain your independence as quickly as possible, we can put you in contact with a network of experts and support you through a compensation claim.

We work closely with our clients, and maintain regular contact to ensure you get the advice, guidance and ongoing support you deserve.

Why Thompsons?

Spinal injury is a very specialist area and, at Thompsons Solicitors, we have the knowledge and expertise to guide you through a claim. We have secured compensation for thousands of spinal injury victims and their families.

With more experience of winning personal injury claims than any other firm, Thompsons uses that experience solely for people who have been injured, never insurance companies or employers.

Our solicitors are experts in settling high-value compensation claims in the shortest possible time. In addition to securing interim payments to cover immediate medical costs for the injuries you have suffered, the team will always strive to secure compensation for any ongoing care, rehabilitation and future support you, and your family, may require.

Mark's story

“I had just turned 17 when I was involved in car accident. I was in the back of my brother’s car when he skidded on black ice, which caused the car to veer down an embankment and crash into a wall.

I was found bent forward with the driver’s seat right back. I had broken my neck in two places, ruptured my spleen and my lungs had collapsed. I was in hospital for nine months, three of which I spent on a life support machine. My injuries from the car accident left me paralysed from the chest down.

My mum contacted Thompsons Solicitors on my behalf and my solicitor began to compile my case.

Thompsons Solicitors were brilliant, from the front line staff through to the solicitors who looked after my case. My solicitor became my friend, the service was so personal, I felt like I could pick up the phone and call at any time. He was a great support to me and my mum. I found it quite difficult to get out and about after I came home from hospital and I was lucky that my solicitor would make house calls to relieve the stress of travelling for me.

Right through to the day my case was settled, Thompsons Solicitors looked after me, they kept fighting to get the level of compensation that would help me live my life independently.”

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Making a spinal injury compensation claim

Getting the best evidence possible

To make a successful claim for compensation, we need to prove that someone else was to blame for your accident and injuries.

Our serious injury solicitors have worked with a range of clients who have suffered spinal injuries as a result of accidents at work, road traffic accidents, clinical negligence, accidents in public places or assaults and attacks.

The stronger the evidence, which may include photographs of your accident or injuries, the stronger your claim will be.

Even if the evidence collected shows you were partly to blame for your accident you may still have a valid claim if we can prove someone else was also at fault.

How much compensation might be awarded?

Our team will help individuals and their families to make a claim for compensation to cover the cost of medical treatment, rehabilitation, changes in lifestyle, and the financial impact of a spinal injury. We will also obtain expert medical reports on your injuries to support your claim if necessary.

After an injury, you may be entitled to claim for the loss of earnings to cover time off work, to support you if you are unable to return to work or have to take a drop in wages to carry out a less-physical role. We can also help you claim all travelling expenses incurred because of an accident, including those of close relatives visiting you in hospital. Keeping receipts will help support your claim.

Adapting your surroundings to allow you to function as normally as possible can be expensive and your claim for compensation can also cover the costs of any rehabilitation aids and equipment you may need, and even a car or an adapted, accessible home to meet your needs.

Rehabilitation and care

Rehabilitation is an important part of recovery from a spinal injury and it is vital to gain the right help and advice as soon as possible.

Our team can help you access neurologists, spinal cord surgeons, urologist, gastroenterologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and support workers to get the ongoing care and support you require.

For very serious injuries, we work with four further types of specialists, who can provide expert advice and support.

- **Case managers** – to plan and coordinate any rehabilitation, care and support a spinal injury victim may require
- **Support workers** – to support patients and their families at home and in the community
- **Disability architects** – to help adapt an individual's surroundings, such as sourcing walking aids, and even a car or adapted, accessible home, to enable them to function as normally as possible
- **Job coaches** – to help look at ways of enabling individuals to return to their current employment, or to provide training to allow them to work in new areas.

Timing can be vital

In the UK, there is a standard time limit of three years from the date of an accident in which a claim for compensation can be made. It is always best to seek legal advice as soon as possible so that a solicitor can thoroughly prepare your claim and, where appropriate, apply for interim payments to help ease the financial strain during your treatment if you are unable to work. Some exceptions to the time limit do exist, and special rules apply for children or adults who lack legal capacity, but it is always best to take legal advice as soon as possible.

What about State Benefit claims?

You may be entitled to state benefits. While these claims are made separately to your claim for compensation, Thompsons can provide advice, or you can contact your local Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) office.



Next steps

We hope this booklet has provided you with the information and guidance you need.

If you would like to talk to us to discuss your situation in more detail, you can contact us, without obligation, for free compensation claim advice.

Phone us: **0800 0 224 224**

Visit us: **www.thompsons.law.co.uk**

Useful contacts

Department for Work and Pensions benefit enquiry line

Freephone 0800 88 22 00
Textphone 0800 24 33 55

Care Quality Commission

03000 61 61 61
www.cqc.org.uk

NHS Direct

0845 4647
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Spinal Injuries Association

Freephone enquiry line 0800 980 0501
sia@spinal.co.uk
www.spinal.co.uk

Aspire

Telephone: 020 8954 5759
Textphone: 020 8420 6501
info@aspire.org.uk
www.aspire.org.uk

ICAS (Independent Complaints Advocacy Service)

www.carersfederation.co.uk

Independent Living Funds

0845 601 8815
funds@ilf.org.uk
www.dwp.gov.uk/ilf

Brain and Spine Foundation

0808 808 1000
helpline@brainandspine.org.uk
www.brainandspine.org.uk

Disabled Living Foundation

0845 130 9177
info@dlf.org.uk
www.dlf.org.uk

The Back Up Trust

020 8875 1805
www.backuptrust.org.uk

0800 0 224 224

For more information visit:

www.thompsons.law.co.uk



@thompsons injury

The information contained in this booklet is not a substitute for legal advice. You should talk to a lawyer or adviser before making a decision about what to do. Thompsons Solicitors is a trading name of Thompsons Solicitors LLP and is regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

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