

Subarachnoid Haemorrhage

A guide to compensation

Expert advice

Subarachnoid haemorrhage is a type of brain haemorrhage caused by bleeding on the brain and reduced oxygen supply. It's a medical emergency and accounts for many thousand hospital admissions in the UK every year.

It's important that subarachnoid haemorrhage is diagnosed quickly and treated without delay otherwise the brain will become damaged which can leave a patient with permanent neurological complications or even cause their death.

Slater and Gordon's medical negligence team has a vast amount of experience in cases of subarachnoid haemorrhage which have been incorrectly diagnosed and will provide all the support and advice necessary when making a claim.

What are the symptoms of subarachnoid haemorrhage?

The symptoms of a subarachnoid haemorrhage are quite distinct. They include:

- a sudden severe headache
- vomiting
- neck stiffness
- confusion
- reduced consciousness
- weakness on one side of the body
- seizures

How is a diagnosis of subarachnoid haemorrhage made?

Upon appropriate questioning, a reasonably competent doctor should be able to make the diagnosis and refer for treatment.

A scan will confirm the diagnosis and once made, the patient will be transferred to a neurosurgical unit where the necessary treatment will be provided.

What treatment is provided to someone with subarachnoid haemorrhage?

The treatment provided would involve surgery in an attempt to coil or clip the leak, and sometimes radiological guided procedures.

These procedures aim to prevent a further bleeding and also prevent disability.



What cases of subarachnoid haemorrhage result in a medical negligence claim?

Unfortunately, medical professionals don't always manage to make a diagnosis of subarachnoid haemorrhage in time. They may fail to recognise and appreciate the symptoms which are distinct.

Instead, the patient may be diagnosed with a more minor condition, for example a migraine or muscle spasm, and discharged from hospital. This can lead to devastating consequences, as left undiagnosed, it's likely the patient will go on to suffer serious bleeding and complications which could have been avoided had a correct diagnosis been made.

There are some cases where CT scans are misreported which leads to inappropriate treatment for the patient based on those clinical findings. However, the majority of cases allege a failure to diagnose and a failure to refer within time.

Advice on making a claim for compensation

For those who don't have experience of the legal process, contacting a lawyer and making a claim for compensation can be a daunting prospect. However, we're with our clients every step of the way, ensuring they understand the claims process, and relieving the burden of having to deal with a variety of practical issues, at what can be a difficult time.



What should you do if you think you have a claim?

Contact us. Our team of specialists have a vast amount of experience in dealing with medical negligence claims.

Once we've taken details, we'll confirm whether or not you have a claim. If you're entitled to compensation, we can start work on your case straightaway and begin gathering evidence.

Time limits apply when making a claim for compensation, so don't delay in contacting us.

What is the cost of making a claim?

We understand that the cost of legal advice can be a worry, but there are options available to fund medical negligence claims.

You may have legal expenses insurance under an existing insurance policy which entitles you to free representation. If legal expenses insurance is not in place, we may be able to conduct your case under a Conditional Fee Agreement, also known as a 'No Win, No Fee' Agreement. This means if the case fails, no payment is due. There are certain medical negligence cases where Legal Aid may be available.

Once we know the circumstances of your claim, we'll be able to discuss your funding options in more detail.

What is the amount of compensation likely to be?

Compensation will be based on the severity of the injury, and also on the personal circumstances of the injured person. For example, if they are unable to work as a result of the injury, loss of earnings may be accounted for. If they were responsible for household chores or caring for a dependent and are no longer able to, the cost of assistance will be taken into account.

If rehabilitation, treatment, aids, equipment or adaptations are required, we will also seek to recover these costs.

How long is the case likely to take?

Every case is different so it's difficult to estimate how long a case is likely to take without first reviewing the circumstances. However, the case will be dealt with by an expert in medical negligence who will deal with the case as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Frequently asked questions

Will I have to go to court?

It's very rare that a medical negligence case will actually go to trial. A large majority of cases settle before a trial takes place. However, if the case doesn't settle before trial, attendance at court may be necessary.

What if the injured person died as a result of the medical negligence?

A claim can still be made by the Estate's legal representative (the person named as Executor in the Will if there is one) or otherwise by a family member.

What if I live outside the UK?

If you live outside the UK, or if the medical negligence occurred whilst outside the UK, it may still be possible to claim for compensation.

We have a team of experts who deal with claims for injuries which occurred outside the UK. They understand the laws which apply and the complex procedure involved.

What if I need assistance in other areas?

We have expert lawyers in many areas of law such as family, employment, welfare benefits, trusts, Court of Protection and disability rights and work closely with those departments to ensure that you get the best possible outcome.