

**13 August 2018**

### **Cut whiplash injuries with the headrest test**

Whiplash injuries and claims can be avoided if drivers and passengers do a simple test this Injury Prevention Day (15 August).

The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) with support from motoring safety experts Thatcham Research, is urging car users to protect themselves by making sure their headrests are in the correct position.

“Half of all car crashes in England result in a whiplash injury\* and some of these could be avoided, along with the resulting compensation claims,” said APIL’s president Brett Dixon. APIL is a not-for-profit organisation which campaigns to prevent needless injuries.

“Your headrest can’t do its job if you haven’t adjusted it to fit you,” said Brett. “It’s like leaving the batteries out of a smoke detector.

“To test your headrest is very simple,” Brett explained. “Make sure it is as close to the back of your head as possible, ideally touching. The top of the headrest should also be as high as the top of your head. Place your hand on top of your head to check.

“It is easy to forget, but we hope drivers will make a point of doing the headrest test this Injury Prevention Day,” said Brett.

Matthew Avery, director of research at Thatcham Research said: “Whiplash is the most common injury in car accidents, and the correct position of the seat’s head restraint is the key factor in protecting people from these types of injuries. We’d recommend that the next time you get in your car, check that the headrest is positioned as high as the top of the head. Where possible, it should also be tilted as close to the back of the head as possible. Touching the head is best. In cars where the head restraint is not adjustable, making the seat more upright can help.

“It’s also really important to remember that whiplash can occur in the back seat as well. So remember to adjust for each rear occupant as well. And to check this for every journey. No one passenger is the same and it needs to be tailored to fit them on every journey.”

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- \* National Travel Survey 2017 – Road Safety
- A photograph of a correctly adjusted headrest is attached.
- The third Wednesday in August (15 August 2018) is Injury Prevention Day, a day for everyone to think about what they can do to help prevent needless injury.
- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation whose members are dedicated to campaigning for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own.
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