

Car crash information from 311

June 2011

I phoned NYC's 311 information line and asked what a pedestrian or cyclist should do when hit by a car. I emphasized that I was not in a crash myself, but was doing research for an article.

The agent gave me instructions on filling out a car accident report at the local police precinct.

I asked: Did the NYC Depts. of Health or Transportation have advice for what a crash victim should do? What are the crash victim's rights?

After a brief hold, the agent said that if struck by a car, a person should call 911 and go to the nearest public hospital. She offered to transfer me to a list of hospitals, or to give me the address of the hospital nearest to my location.

I repeated that my question was research for an article to instruct readers what to do, and apologized for making her job difficult.

The agent said she would check for further instructions. She returned moments later with a phone number for the Bar Association, which has an attorney referral service. Next, she gave me a phone number and Web address for the NY Courts.

The agent was fast and responsive, and gave me the information that was available.

Crucially, the available information did not include a reference to either the No-Fault or MVAIC insurance programs, to which pedestrians and cyclists are entitled when hit by a car in New York State.