

E.R.: Pediatric Patient Now Paralyzed Due To Nurse's Negligence.

The whole family was injured in an automobile collision with a drunk driver.

The injuries to the six year-old boy are the issue in a ruling recently handed down by the Supreme Court of Arkansas.

At the scene the child had visible facial lacerations and also seemed to have a fractured wrist. Although he was moving all his extremities he was placed on a spine board with a cervical collar as a precaution by emergency response personnel for transport to the emergency room at the nearest community hospital.

At the hospital he complained to the nurse of abdominal pain and pain in his arms and legs.

The emergency department physician, without examining him, ordered a CT scan of his head, neck, abdomen and pelvis. Afterward it took almost four hours for a physician to look at the CT scan, and when it was read it was incorrectly read as showing no evidence of injury.

After the CT was misread, and before the patient was seen by a physician, the nurse removed the boy's cervical collar, grabbed his arm and started pulling to get him to stand up.

SUPREME COURT OF ARKANSAS
February 12, 2009

The child suffered catastrophic spinal-cord injuries for which the parents were ruled eligible to sue the state's liability insurance pool for compensation in addition to suing the hospital and physician for negligence. Archer v. Sisters of Mercy Health System, __ S.W. 3d __, 2009 WL 348291 (Ark., February 12, 2009).