

Care of the Expired Patient

Important Points to Know

- Verify patient has passed away
- Two members of the health care team must identify the patient with two patient identifiers.
 - One member **must** be an RN
- Call MD
- MD will pronounce the patient expired
- The MD must contact the family
- RN must notify Nursing Supervisor on duty

Notify Admitting Immediately if there is a death

- Give the following information:
 - Patient name
 - Time of death
 - Name of MD & beeper# who pronounced patient
 - Cause of death
 - Diagnosis
 - Will there be an autopsy?
 - Was consent for autopsy signed by next of kin?
 - Does the Medical Examiner need to be notified?
 - Was the Organ Donor Network notified?

Age Specific Considerations

- There is no age limit on organ donation, however there are restrictions on tissue donation.

1. New York Organ Donor Network. NYODN.ORG

Mandatory Reporting CMS

- What needs to be reported to designated Organ Procurement Organization (New York Donor Network)?
 - All deaths
 - Imminent deaths
 - Terminal weans
- Regardless of age
- Determines medical suitability for donation



Who can be a potential donor?

- Severe Neurological Injured Patients
 - Brain Death
 - Must meet NYODN medical criteria
- Consent from family or next-of-kin must be present

Potential Tissue Donors

- Individuals who have suffered cardiac or brain death.
- Tissue Donation:
 - Eyes, bone, fascia, heart valves, skin and vessels.

Preparing the Body for the Morgue

- Two members of the health care team must match patient's ID band with toe tags and sign the back of each tag. One person must be an RN.
- Religious and cultural considerations



Preparing the Body for the Morgue

- Do not remove any lines, drains or tubes:
 - If an autopsy is planned
 - The case is referred to the medical examiner
 - If the patient is a member of the Orthodox Jewish Faith.

Preparing the Body for the Morgue

Equipment

- Morgue Pack
- Zippered Body bag
- Combine, 4x4 gauze
- Adhesive tape
- Washcloths and towels
- Wash basin

Preparing the Body for the Morgue

- ID tags –
 - prepare 3 with addressograph
- Bathe patient thoroughly
- Insert dentures, if applicable
- Remove all jewelry
- Pad rectum with combines
- Tie the wrist, ankles together (religious implications)
- Prep the eyes
 - Cornea harvesting

Criteria for Eye Donation

All patients should get eye prep as routine post-mortem care (see next slide).

- Age range:
 - 1-72 years
- Time limit:
 - < 12 hours after death
- Absence of the following diagnosis:
 - Septicemia confirmed by (+) blood cultures
 - Leukemia or lymphoma
 - Slow viral infections (AIDS, Hepatitis)
 - Death of unknown cause

Care of the Expired Patient's Eyes

- Close donor eyelids
- Elevate head on pillow or head back
- Apply saline soaks to closed eyelids (no tape please)
- Once body preparation is complete, patient is sent to morgue with saline soaks on eyelids
 - Lacrilube may also be used in some facilities

Preparing the Body for the Morgue

- Wrap patient in plastic shroud
- Place patient in the zippered body bag

Preparing the Body for the Morgue

Placement of three identification tags:

- Toe
- Outside of body bag
- Personal belongings

Preparing the Body for the Morgue

- Bring the patient to the Morgue
- Place the body in the morgue refrigerator
- Be sure to enter date, patient's name, time of expiration time of placement in the morgue.
- Transporter must sign the *Release of Remains Form*
- Replace the vacant tray of the morgue stretcher

Write in the Progress Note:

- Time the patient apparently had no spontaneous respiration, absence of pulse.
- Time the house officer or attending physician was notified.
- Time the patient was pronounced dead.
 - MD who pronounced the patient
- Proper notification was made?
- Patient's family was contacted of the patient's death
- Post mortem care must also be documented in the Progress notes.

Morgue Information

- Open
 - Hours may vary from site to site
 - Call the morgue attendant



Special Points

- Deceased patient must be transported to the morgue on the covered morgue stretcher and
- Deceased patient should not be released to a funeral director from the patient care unit
- Family is given approximately 2 hours to view the deceased
- The patient chart must be forwarded to medical records
- The patient must be discharged out of the computer using Invisions or your census tracking system.

Personal Belongings

Jewelry:

- If ring cannot be removed, tape ring to finger and document.
- If valuables cannot be given to family, it is brought to the Cashier's office
 - If the cashier is closed, bring the valuables to the Emergency Department (to their safe) or call your supervisor.

Life: Pass It On

- Enroll in the New York State Organ/Tissue Donor Registry

www.health.state.ny.us

- Remember to discuss your decision with family members.
- NY ORGAN DONOR NETWORK
 - 1-800-GIFT4NY



When you decide to donate your organs and tissues:

- Your heart could beat for someone else.
- Your lungs could breathe for someone else
- Your kidneys could free two people from dialysis.
- Your liver could save the life of a patient awaiting a transplant.

When you decide to donate your organs and tissues:

- Your corneas could give sight to two people.
- Your bones could help repair other people's damaged joints.
- Your skin could help heal burn victims.

Reportable Deaths

According to the CDC, deaths that should be reported to the coroner or medical examiner's office include:

- Death by homicide, suicide, accident, and other violent deaths such as thermal, chemical, or radiation-related deaths, and those caused by criminal abortion
- Sudden death-not caused by readily recognizable disease
- Death of person whose body will be cremated or otherwise disposed of such that further examination can't be done
- Death of inmates who are not hospitalized
- Death related to employment (accident or disease)
- Death related to contagious disease, or other conditions that constitute a threat to public health



Reportable Deaths

Although laws vary among states, some or all of the following items have been added to the list of reportable deaths:

- Death after transfer from another facility
- Death where there was inadequate clinical information on admission or at the time of death
- Death within 24 hours of admission
- Unattended death
- Death in the Emergency Department
- Death during or shortly after surgery or a procedure

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (2006).



You have completed this module

- It is required that you take an online post test after module completion.
- Passing score is 100%

**Complete the post assessment
Care of the Expired Patient
which is located on the Quia site**