

Table of Contents

1 Medicolegal Investigative Systems

Definition of Death
Delayed Deaths
Cause, Manner, and Mechanism of Death
Sudden, Unexpected Natural Death
The Coroner System
The Medical Examiner System
Operation of a Medical Examiner System
NAME Accreditation
References

2 Time of Death

Livor Mortis
Rigor Mortis
Body Temperature
Decomposition
Chemical Changes in Body Fluids
Flow-Cytometry
Gastric Emptying and Digestion
Insect Activity
Scene Markers
References

3 Deaths Due to Natural Disease

Cardiovascular Disease
Coronary Atherosclerosis
Bridging
Dissecting Coronary Aneurysm
Coronary Artery Spasm
Mechanism of Sudden Death
Sudden Death: Exercise and Climate
Hypertensive Cardiovascular Disease
Cardiomyopathy

Valvular Disease
Coronary Artery Anomalies
Myocarditis
Aortic Dissection
Sudden Death on a Physiological Basis
Deaths Due to Intracranial Lesions
Epilepsy
Nontraumatic Subarachnoid Hemorrhage
Berry Aneurysms
Intracerebral Hemorrhage
Primary Brain Tumors
Meningitis
Reyes Syndrome
Hydrocephalus
Psychiatric Patients
Respiratory System
Epiglottitis
Pulmonary Thromboemboli
Asthma
Pneumonia
Hemoptysis
Spontaneous Pneumothorax of Newborns
Urogenital and Gastrointestinal Tracts
Spleen
Pancreas
Liver
Adrenals
Miscellaneous
Tumor and Trauma
References

4 Blunt Trauma Wounds

Abrasions
Dating of Abrasions
Contusions
Dating of Contusions
Postmortem Bruising
The Eyes and Eyelids
Decomposed Bodies
Lacerations
Defense Wounds Due to Blunt Force
Determination of Whether a Wound is Ante- or Postmortem

Fractures of the Face
Fractures of the the Extremities
Fractures from Direct Application of Force
Fractures Caused by Indirect Application of Force
Pelvic Fractures
Healing of Fractures
References

5 Blunt Trauma Injuries of the Trunk and Extremities

Blunt Force Injuries of the Chest
Injury to the Ribs
The Sternum
The Heart
The Aorta
Diaphragm
Lungs
Blunt Force Injuries of the Abdominal Viscera
Liver
Pancreas
Spleen
Gastrointestinal Tract
Kidneys
Urinary Bladder
Internal Genitalia
Blunt Force Injuries of the Extremities
References

6 Trauma to the Skull and Brain: Craniocerebral Injuries

Impact Injuries
Soft Tissue Injuries
Fractures of the Skull
Contusions of the Brain
Lacerating, Penetrating, and Perforating Wounds of the Brain
Epidural Hemorrhages
Acceleration/Deceleration Injuries
Subdural Hematomas
Diffuse Axonal Injury
Death Due to Cerebral Concussion
Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

Vertebral Artery Injury (Laceration)
Traumatic Injury of the Carotid Artery
Traumatic Dissection of Intracranial Arteries
Traumatic Brain Swelling and Edema
Boxing Injuries
Occipito-Cervical Injuries
Lacerations of the Brainstem
Traumatic Intracranial Aneurysms
Cerebral Palsy
References

7 Wounds Caused by Pointed and Sharp-Edged Weapons

Stab Wounds
Depth of Stab Wounds
Appearance of Stab Wounds in Skin
Stab Wounds from Weapons Other than Knives
Identifying the Weapon
Manner of Death
Stab Wounds by Anatomical Location
Incised-Stab Wounds
Physical Activity Following a Fatal Stab Wound
Force Necessary to Inflict Fatal Stab Wounds
Postmortem Bleeding
Incised Wounds
Incised Wounds of the Neck
Miscellaneous
Chop Wounds
Therapeutic or Diagnostic Wounds
References

8 Asphyxia

Suffocation
Entrapment / Environmental Suffocation
Smothering
Choking
Mechanical Asphyxia
Suffocating Gases
Strangulation
Ligature Strangulation
Manual Strangulation

Chemical Asphyxiants
Sexual Asphyxia (Autoerotic Asphyxia, Autoerotic Deaths)
References

9 Deaths Caused by Motor Vehicle Accidents

Causes of Motor Vehicle Accidents
Natural Disease as a Cause of Motor Vehicle Accidents
Categories of Motor Vehicle Accidents
Front Impact Crashes
Side Impact Crashes
Rollovers
Rear Impact Crashes
Seat Belts and Air Bags
Air Bags
Motor Vehicle Fires
Motorcycle Accidents
Suicide by Motor Vehicles
Determination of Who Was Driving
Motor Vehicle-Train Accidents
Toxicology in Motor Vehicle Accidents
Pedestrian Deaths
Relationship between Speed at Impact and Injuries
Child Pedestrians
Adult Pedestrians
References

10 Airplane Crashes

Crashes Involving Light Planes
Crashes of Commercial Aircraft
Causes of Crashes
Crash Scene
Crash Patterns
In-Flight Fire
Helicopter Crashes
Hot-Air Balloons
Lightning Strikes
References

11 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

Incidence of SIDS
Presentation of Cases

Non-Hereditary Nature of SIDS
Diagnosis of SIDS
Etiology of SIDS
Investigation of the Death
Communication with the Parents
References

12 Neonaticide, Infanticide, and Child Homicide

Neonaticide
Infanticide and Child Murder
Battered Baby Syndrome
The "Impulse" or "Angry" Homicide
"Gentle" Homicides and the Lethal Variant of
Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy
Miscellaneous Causes of Child Deaths
Radiological Evidence of Child Abuse
The Shaken Baby Syndrome
Unintentional Causes of Intracranial Hemorrhage
References

13 Fire Deaths

Burns
Severity of Burn Injuries
Deaths Caused by Fire
The Burned Body
Smoke Inhalation
Inhalation Injuries
Identification of the Deceased
Causes of Fires
Homicide by Fire
Self Immolation
Scalding Burns
Chemical Burns
Microwave Burns
Miscellaneous
Flash Fires: Fires Involving Flammable
Hydrocarbon Liquids
Flashover
References

14 Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Mechanism of Action
Deaths from Motor Vehicle Exhaust
Survival Time
Outdoor Deaths Caused by Carbon Monoxide
Carbon Monoxide Deaths from Sources Other than Exhaust
Decomposition and Carbon Monoxide
Signs and Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
Fatal Levels of Carbon Monoxide
Suicide or Accident
Autopsy Findings
References

15 Death by Drowning

Physiology of Drowning
Autopsy Findings
Tests for Drowning
Drownings in Bathtubs
Scuba Divers
References

16 Electrocution

Mechanism of Death
Fractures Caused by Electrocution
Involuntary Movements Caused by Electricity-Induced
Contraction of Muscle
Autopsy Findings
Manner of Death
Lightning
References

17 Hyperthermia and Hypothermia: the Effects of Heat and Cold

Heat Stroke
Malignant Hyperthermia
Miscellaneous Causes of Hyperthermia
Saunas
Exercise, Body Temperature, Humidity and Exhaustion

Hypothermia
Hypothermia in Water
Hypothermia on Land
References

18 Rape

The Living Rape Victim
Rape-Homicides
Transport of the Body
Examination of the Body
Trace Evidence Recovery from the Hands
Examination of the Clothing
The Body
Hair
Evidence of Sexual Intercourse
Bite Marks
Homosexual Rape
DNA Analysis
Short Tandem Repeats
Combined DNA Index System
Mitochondrial DNA Analysis
References

19 Emboli

Gas Embolism
Fat Embolism Syndrome
Amniotic Fluid Emboli
References

20 Topics in Forensic Pathology

Primary Cardiac Arrest during Exercise
Starvation
Anaphylactic Deaths
Injury of the Eye Caused by Acids and Alkalis
Death in the Dental Chair
Maternal Mortality: Criminal Abortion
Abortifacient Drugs
Local Abortifacient
Instrumentation

Stillborn Infants
Traumatic Lesions of Birth
Water Intoxication
Vitreous
Electrolyte Disorders
Blast Injuries
Intra-Operative Deaths
References

21 Nursing Home Deaths

Drug Overdoses
Accidents Not Involving Medications
Homicides
Suicides
Gross Neglect of Patients
Signs of Neglect
Contractures
Malnutrition
Dehydration
Decubitus Ulcers
Homicide by Decubitus Ulcers
Deaths Caused by Hospital Bed Side-Rails
Deaths Caused by Medical Restraints
References

22 Sudden Death During or Immediately after a Violent Struggle

Excited Delirium
Catecholamine Release
Potassium
Effects of Catecholamines on the Heart
Actions of Drugs
Alcohol
Endogenous Mental Disease; Acute Psychotic Episodes
Natural Disease without Anatomical Manifestations
Deaths Ascribed to Positional Asphyxia
Certification of Death
Pepper Spray
References

23 Interpretive Toxicology: Drug Abuse and Drug Deaths

Collection of Tissue for Analysis

Tissue Analyses

Analysis

Toxicology Screens

Deaths

Ethyl Alcohol

Methyl Alcohol

Isopropanol

Ethylene Glycol

Phencyclidine (PCP)

Heroin

Propoxyphene

Fentanyl

Cocaine

Methamphetamine and Amphetamine

Miscellaneous Narcotics

Inhalants

Lead

Iron

Lye (NaOH)

Arsenic

Cyanide

Strychnine

Digoxin, Succinylcholine, and Insulin

Antidepressants

Mixed Drug Overdose

Barbiturates

References

Appendix

The Forensic Autopsy

The Autopsy Report