

PEDIATRIC TRAUMA UPDATE

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TO REMOVE OR NOT TO... THAT IS OFTEN THE QUESTION



Unfortunately most of us have been involved in the death of a child. At UI Children's Hospital we take pride in doing all we can to make this devastating time the "best" it can be. Through our bereavement program, we have improved many aspect of post-mortem care, but one question you may still be asking is, "Can I remove the invasive tubes (ET tube, foley, IVs, central lines, NGs, etc) in this child to make viewing of the body easier for the family?"

Removal of any invasive line or tube in a deceased person should not be taken lightly. Remember that if the death is to be reviewed by the medical examiner (ME) legally you CANNOT remove anything until they have given permis-

sion. Iowa Code actually states it is an offense to move or disturb a body that is under the jurisdiction of the ME without their authorization.

Often a simple phone call to the ME will alleviate any concerns, so remember to take the time to make that call. Contact may be made as follows:

- The most direct method of contact is to page the ME at 887-8822, 24 hours a day.
- They can also be reached by calling the Johnson County Sherriff to request a page be sent to the ME. Sheriff phone is 356-6020.
- Contact with the ME can also be made through the hospital

mortician (Decedent Care Specialists).

Finally, if lines or tubes are unable to be removed an explanation to the family often will alleviate their concerns. The ME is also happy to help with this as needed.

Death is an unavoidable part of life. Making a family comfortable during this horrific time is truly one of the most special things a health care provider can do. Thank you!

More questions about bereavement and family support. Please contact Shiela Frascht, Grief Services Coordinator at

shiela-frascht@uiowa.edu



If you have ANY questions related to the need to involve the medical examiner please give them a call and together the decision can be made.

WHAT IS A MEDICAL EXAMINER CASE?

Iowa Code defines a ME case as follows:

- Motor vehicle collisions
- Poisonings/Overdoses
- Suicides
- Homicides
- Other violent or traumatic deaths

- When a child is dead on arrival to UI Children's Hospital
- When there are unexplained or suspicious circumstances surrounding the death.
- When there is a sudden and unexpected death of an in-patient.
- When the death is an apparent complication of a medical or surgical procedure.



Pediatric Trauma Cases July 2008

Number of Admissions	42
Number of ED visits	55
Average Injury Severity Score	16
Number of Trauma Alerts	25
Number of Trauma Activations	10

Special Points of Interest

- Next Pediatric Multidisciplinary meeting will be held on September 2nd at 07 in the Pediatric Surgery Conference Room.
- Questions or concerns related to Pediatric Trauma Care? Contact Kristel Wetjen @ 6-1299 or page 5239. kristel-wetjen@uiowa.edu



ATTENTION:

The American College of Surgeons will be conducting their Pediatric Level I and Adult Level I Trauma Verification on October 27th and 28th. Time to get excited and show off! Please watch for more updates!