

AUTOPSY
Sioux Falls, SD

INTRODUCTION

An autopsy is a pathologic examination of a portion or the entirety of a deceased individual's body. Autopsies are a valuable means of determining cause of death plus determining whether other significant, possibly clinically unsuspected, diseases exist. An autopsy does not prevent viewing of the body in an open casket ceremony and can be limited to any degree requested by the family, even to the point of needle biopsy only.

AUTOPSY ORDERING GUIDELINES

We offer a full range of autopsy services. The autopsies performed are generally divided into two main categories - autopsies done for hospital deaths and autopsies done for forensic or medicolegal reasons. Hospital autopsies are usually ordered by a decedent's family while forensic autopsies are usually ordered by county medical examiners or coroners.

To obtain either a hospital or a forensic autopsy we suggest that our clients initially contact one of the pathology assistants (PA's), pathology resident or the PA on call if it is after hours. The PA or pathology resident will make the necessary arrangements and schedule the autopsy. The PA or pathology resident will contact the forensic pathologist (Dr. Snell) for more complicated forensic cases, or the client may choose to contact the forensic pathologist directly.

After consultation with the pathologist, PA or pathology resident, all autopsies will be performed by a pathologist at the Sanford Hospital morgue in Sioux Falls

Although we suggest complete autopsies, we are happy to perform partial autopsies, including brain retrievals for dementia studies. Complete autopsies are always recommended for all forensic autopsies. Partial autopsies of forensic cases of definite criminal or legal concern will not be done.

Autopsy reports will be given only to the parties authorizing and/or paying for an autopsy. We require a release from those individuals prior to disseminating autopsy results to other individuals or agencies.

We welcome death scene investigation and other forensic consultation requests. These consultation requests should be made directly to the forensic pathologist or the resident on call.