

## **E.R.: Nurses Did Not Relay Patient's Complaints To Physician, Faulted For Patient's Death From Heart Attack.**

The forty-six year-old female patient came to the E.R. with complaints of chest pain and chest tightness.

The E.R. nurses got two EKG's. One was normal and one seemed to show a septal infarct. No labs were obtained for cardiac enzymes.

The physician diagnosed high blood pressure, ordered one dosage of oral captopril 25 mg and an albuterol treatment and discharged her home.

The next a.m., nine hours after discharge, the patient had a myocardial infarction at home. She was rushed to another hospital where she was dead on arrival.

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***The E.R. nurses never communicated to the E.R. physician that the patient's chief complaints on arrival were chest pain and chest tightness.***

DISTRICT COURT  
JEFFERSON COUNTY, TEXAS  
January 21, 2010

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The jury in the District Court, Jefferson County, Texas awarded more than \$1 million to the family. The verdict was apportioned 80% against the hospital and 20% against the E.R. physician.

The E.R. physician, unlike the E.R. nurses, was not an employee of the hospital but was associated with a medical practice group that was a separate corporation.

The E.R. physician's insurer settled with the family before trial for an undisclosed sum. The fact that a settlement had been paid, although not the amount of the settlement, was blurted out improperly to the jury by one of the hospital's expert witnesses. The judge declined to order a mistrial as it did not seem to have affected the ultimate outcome. **Estate of Meaux v. Christus Health**, 2010 WL 751971 (Dist. Ct. Jefferson Co., Texas, January 21, 2010).