

# Alcohol Withdrawal: Nursing Care Faulted.

The patient entered the hospital for alcoholism treatment. That required medical detox. The physicians' plan was to wait for symptoms such as delirium tremens to appear and then treat the symptoms with Ativan. The physicians were faulted for not starting him on benzodiazepines earlier.

Along the way a Dobhoff nasogastric tube was inserted so that he could receive nutrition despite his nausea. He was placed on aspiration precautions.

The nurses were faulted for allowing a patient with a feeding tube, who should have been handled as a high regurgitation aspiration risk, to lie flat on his back for extended periods of time. There was also some question whether the tube was ever verified as correctly lodged in the stomach.

Nutrient fluid entered his lungs. He experienced an anoxic brain injury which led to his death at age fifty-two.

The US District Court for the District of Connecticut awarded his widow \$300,000. **Edwards v. US, 2008 WL 220744 (D. Conn., January 25, 2008).**