

Fall: Brain-Injury Patient Left Alone On Commode.

The thirty-nine year-old patient had been treated with emergency surgery for a right-side brain abscess that was causing brain-stem herniation.

The surgery had involved resection, that is, removal of a major portion of the right side of her brain, leaving significant left-sided paralysis, speech impairment, blindness in both eyes and a host of other neurological problems.

The patient needed a comprehensive program of assistance with all major activities of daily living and was transferred to a nursing home.

In the nursing home she was left alone on the commode in the middle of the night. She fell and struck her head.

She was examined by the nursing home's medical director. He found nothing wrong. A few days later, however, the patient was rushed to the E.R. with a new subdural hematoma from the fall which now compounds the problems she had before.

Her lawsuit against the nursing home in the Circuit Court, Dane County, Wisconsin settled for \$500,000. **Harrison v. Meriter Health Services, 2007 WL 4976341 (Cir. Ct. Dane Co., Wisconsin, July 1, 2007).**