

Dilaudid: Nurse Gave Med To Hypotensive Patient.

The twenty-four year-old patient had been diagnosed with Type I diabetes at age eleven. Since that time she had developed hypertension and had begun hemodialysis for kidney disease.

She had to be admitted to the hospital for a pulmonary embolism. A few months later she was admitted again when she complained of epigastric pain radiating to her back. IV Dilaudid was ordered prn for pain along with other medications.

During the night her blood pressure dropped to 87/49 and her blood glucose was 49. Her blood glucose rose after an infusion of IV fluid, but her blood pressure did not. Her nurse gave the prn Dilaudid.

Vital signs were reportedly never checked prior to the patient being found cold and unresponsive at 5:30 a.m. The patient had to be put on a ventilator and died two weeks later.

The patient's blood pressure was 87/49 and there were physician's orders to give a bolus of IV fluid, take a blood pressure and call the physician back.

The nurse gave prn Dilaudid for pain.

CIRCUIT COURT
OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN
March 8, 2010

The family's lawsuit filed in the Circuit Court, Oakland County, Michigan claimed that the nurse should have been aware of the effect that Dilaudid given around midnight and Zofran given at 2:30 a.m. would be expected to have on an already hypotensive patient.

Vital signs should have been closely and frequently monitored during the minutes and hours after the medications were given.

The hospital paid a settlement of \$150,000. **Scott v. St. John Health Sys., 2010 WL 5814192 (Cir. Ct. Oakland Co., Michigan, March 8, 2010).**