

Toxic Megacolon: Settlement Faults Nursing Care.

The elderly patient reportedly spent more than a month in the nursing home and never had a bowel movement.

The patient was admitted to the nursing home with a host of medical diagnoses including chronic renal failure and progressive systemic sclerosis. Reglan and Senokot were prescribed as well as laciulose pm.

The patient began to experience vomiting and had hypoactive bowel sounds, began complaining of constipation and her abdomen became distended and firm to the touch. Still she had no bowel movements.

She was finally taken to the emergency room in hypotensive shock. An x-ray showed her colon was distended with stool. During surgery it was discovered the cecum had leaked releasing massive fecal soiling into the entire abdomen. She died several weeks later from sepsis and multi-organ failure.

The family's lawsuit in the Circuit Court, Wayne County, Michigan faulted the nurses for failing to monitor the patient and failing to report obvious signs to the physician. The lawsuit settled for payments of \$12,500 from the physician and \$15,000 from the nursing home, most of which went to the family's attorney. **Ridgeway v. Ansari, 2010 WL 5892777 (Cir. Ct. Wayne Co, Michigan, February 4, 2010).**