

Overdose: Widow Of Patient Obtains Jury Verdict.

The seventy-six year-old patient was admitted to a skilled nursing facility for rehab following hospitalization for a non-displaced hip fracture.

His admitting diagnoses included diabetes, coronary artery disease, Parkinson's disease and orthostatic hypotension.

He died in the nursing facility one week after admission.

The facility's medication administration records were incomplete to the point it could not be determined how much morphine he had or had not received. Nor were nursing progress notes available from which it could be determined whether or not he was showing signs of toxicity.

However, the toxicology report from the autopsy revealed a morphine level well beyond the therapeutic range. From that fact alone the jury in the Circuit Court, Monroe County, Michigan was able to find the patient's nurses and physician negligent and award the widow \$4,850,000. **May v. Mercy Memorial Nursing Ctr., 2010 WL 4633418 (Cir. Ct. Monroe Co., Michigan, June 1, 2010).**