

Phenergan: IV Infiltration, Nurses Held Responsible For Loss Of Patient's Thumb.

The forty-seven year old diabetic patient was admitted to the hospital for complications of chronic pancreatitis.

An IV was started in his right wrist. It was checked fifteen minutes later by his nurse and found to be intact.

Seven hours later, at 2:35 a.m., he began to complain of pain. A combination of Demerol and Phenergan was started through the IV. Soon the patient began to report he was also having severe pain in his hand and that his hand had begun to swell. The nursing progress notes mentioned that the hand was painful and swollen when the IV was checked at 3:00 a.m.

The IV was removed forty-five minutes later. The pain and swelling persisted in the hand for another thirty-six hours. The physician brought in an orthopedist for a consult, who recommended transferring the patient immediately by ambulance to a nearby tertiary care center for surgery.

The surgeon had to amputate the thumb. The patient remained at that hospital twenty-four more days for additional surgical procedures.

The nurses allowed the Phenergan to infuse too rapidly through the IV in the patient's wrist, leading to extravasation into the surrounding tissue.

Then they failed to remove the IV and report the situation to the physician as soon as they should have.

SUPERIOR COURT
COFFEE COUNTY, GEORGIA
March 26, 2010

The jury in the Superior Court, Coffee County, Georgia awarded the patient \$1,533,026 from the hospital. **Jackson v. Coffee Regional Med. Ctr., 2010 WL 4231489 (Sup. Ct. Coffee Co., Georgia, March 26, 2010.)**