

E.R.: Nurses, Physicians Failed To Catch Impending Stroke.

The patient, twenty-eight weeks pregnant, came to the emergency room complaining that her right arm was numb. A head CT was obtained, a neurology consult was ordered and her obstetrician was phoned.

The patient's obstetrician, without waiting for the neurology consult, sent the patient home based on a diagnosis of generalized anxiety.

Two days later she went to another hospital where the weakness in her right upper and lower extremities was tied to a left middle cerebral artery stroke.

Elevated hormone levels predispose a pregnant woman to thromboembolic events.

The work-up when signs of neurological deficit are seen should include a CBC with platelet count, prothrombin time and partial thromboplastin time.

COURT OF APPEALS OF TEXAS
June 18, 2009

The Court of Appeals of Texas endorsed a physician's expert report filed by the patient's attorney which implicated the emergency room triage nurse for negligence along with the emergency room physician and the patient's obstetrician.

According to the expert, all of the patient's caregivers should have been concerned about the possibility of an impending stroke. The patient should have been admitted to the hospital for anti-platelet medications, medications to control her blood pressure and treatment of eclampsia and toxemia of pregnancy. An immediate cesarean should also have been considered. ***Rittger v. Danos***, __ S.W. 3d __, 2009 WL 1688099 (Tex. App., June 18, 2009).