



Pathology & Biology Section – 2005

G27 The Spontaneous Oesophagus Perforation: A Forensic Point of View

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After attending this poster, attendees will understand a case report of forensic autopsy of an unusual cause of death.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by demonstrating the contribution of Boerhaave syndrome to sudden death.

An autopsy was performed on a young adult, who apparently died during his sleep. Mediastinitis was established and empyema was also found in the left pleural cavity. The esophagus examination showed a tear in left side. The lesion occurred in the distal esophagus and showed the leak communicating freely with the left pleural space. Esophageal perforation was the cause of empyema, and death resulted from barotrauma to the lower oesophagus during the effort of vomiting. The disease is Boerhaave syndrome, a serious and rapidly fatal spontaneous esophagus rupture. Forceful ejection of gastric contents in an unrelaxed esophagus against a closed glottis is the mechanism described. The tear thus produced is vertical, akin to the "Mallory-Weiss" tear. The poster discusses the historical, statistical, pathophysiological, diagnostic and therapeutic aspects of Boerhaave syndrome.

Spontaneous Oesophagus Rupture, Autopsy, Death