



G113 Pathologic Study of 125 Autopsied Cases Where Subjects Died in Custody

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After attending this presentation, attendees will understand relative information about death in custody in China and the fact that most of these deaths are natural without homicide and illegal factors.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by discussing impressions of Chinese prison law enforcement.

In recent years, the people who have died in custody or during the law enforcement practices have extensively attracted public concern. The possibility of violation of human power or illegal practices by police officers and other law enforcement officers have been frequently questioned. For this reason, a retrospective study was performed on the 125 cases that died in different sites such as prison, custody, detention centers, drug addiction treatment places, interrogation rooms, detention rooms, as well as during arrest and other enforcement processes of the public security bureau, prosecutors, courts, and other units. The 125 cases were selected from the Department of Forensic Pathology, Tongji Medical College, Huazhong University of Science and Technology from 1999 to 2009. For all of the cases, a comprehensive autopsy and histo-pathological examination were performed, some of them with laboratory tests such as toxicological analysis or biochemical examination of blood. Results: (1) the cases who died in the above-mentioned sites accounted for 4.42% of cases in 11 years, and showed a declining tendency in the past four years; (2) gender and age: men (123 cases, 98.40%) obviously more than women (2 cases, 1.60%), aged between 15 and 77 years old, with young and adult male from 20 to 49 years old occupied 103 cases (82.4%), the two female cases were 23 and 42-years-old; (3) occupation: 72 cases (57.6%) were farmers; 30 cases unemployed; worker, cadre, student, and self-employed, were four, three, two, and one cases, respectively; and the remaining 13 cases were occupation unknown; (4) Duration in detention: from zero hours to five years and seven months, mostly less than one month (68 cases, 54.4%), 99 cases in six months (79.2%); (5) Interval time between death and autopsy: five hours to 209 days, of which 60 cases were within 48 hours (48%); (6) the place of death: hospital, prisons, detention centers, interrogation rooms, drug addiction treatment places, arrest and elsewhere were 79, 14, 12, 8, 3, 2, and 7 cases respectively, with the majority (63.2%) dying in hospital; (7) Cause of death: among 118 known cases, 86 died of diseases; 16 cases, mechanical asphyxia; 13 cases, mechanical injury; three cases, poisoning; (8) manner of death: 86 cases were natural deaths; 25 suicide; seven accidental death; seven unknown; and no homicide cases; and, (9) classification of diseases: in 86 cases death of of disease, 41 were from cardiovascular diseases; 17 from respiratory system diseases; nine, central nervous system diseases; eight, digestive systems diseases, and 11 cases, other diseases. This data is consistent with the facts that most criminal offenders are young and adult men, the majority of deaths are natural except for a small number of suicides and accidental deaths, and there were no homicidal cases. It is suggested that all police and law enforcement units should further strengthen education, management, and disease prevention in order to prevent suicide, accidents, and illnesses.

Forensic Pathology, Regulatory Sites, Analysis of Death