



General Section - 2016

E31 Suicide or Homicide: A Case of Multiple Stab Wounds and Poisoning

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After attending this presentation, attendees will understand the importance of a complete and thorough medicolegal death investigation in cases in which the death was due to multiple stab wound injuries and that the manner of death may be a suicide or a homicide. This case study presentation will demonstrate how and why these complex cases must be thoroughly investigated by medicolegal death investigators and treated as a homicide until proven otherwise.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing information regarding suicides involving multiple stab wound injuries and the medicolegal death investigation process used to investigate one such case.

Suicides resulting from multiple stab wounds/multiple injuries are fairly uncommon and much can be learned from those cases when they do occur. This presentation involves a case study of a 36-year-old Caucasian male who died from approximately 15 self-inflicted stab wounds. This case study highlights the importance of a multidisciplinary team approach while investigating these complex medicolegal death investigations that may initially be considered either a suicide or a homicide.

This presentation includes: case information regarding the extensive death scene investigation which includes multiple weapons, multiple locations and the presence of rat poison and other toxic substances; a review of pertinent medical records; a review of social service records; autopsy findings; toxicology results; and the relevant interviews conducted by the medicolegal death investigator and law enforcement personnel who were utilized prior to ruling the death a suicide.

This study discusses the physical findings noted in this case as well as similarities and differences which may be found in suicide deaths resulting from multiple stab wounds and a homicide resulting from multiple stab wounds. The importance of a medicolegal death scene investigation and a complete medical record review will also be discussed. This case study is a useful tool in explaining and discussing the importance of an immediate and timely death scene investigation and the information which may be obtained. This case also highlights the importance of obtaining and reviewing all social records as well as the importance of interviews which may be conducted by medicolegal death investigators and/or law enforcement personnel with family, friends, co-workers, medical providers, and others. A team approach to investigating these complex and suspicious death investigations is required in order to accurately determine the manner of death.

Suicide, Stabbing, Rat Poison