

Support your  
local medical  
examiner. Die  
strangely.

# THE AUTOPSY REPORT



# PURPOSE of the AUTOPSY REPORT

To properly certify the **CAUSE & MANNER** of death

Recall:

**COD**: the injury, disease, or combo of 2 that initiates a train of physiological disturbances that result in the fatal termination of an indiv's life

**Immediate COD**= disease/injury present @ time that **caused** the person's death

**Proximate COD** = original natural disease process, injury, or event that led to a string of events over time that eventually led to person's death

**Mech of Death**: physlgc/biochem process by which death came about – **NOT always on Report**

**Manner of Death**: the fashion in which the COD arose

- **NATURAL**: natural disease process w/ no influence
- **ACCIDENT**: event occurring by CHANCE or from unknown causes, w/ a lack of intention
- **SUICIDE**: act of taking one's own life voluntarily
- **HOMICIDE**: killing of one Hu by another

*NOTE: Does NOT neccisarily mean MURDER...  
it's up to the COURTS to determine if MURDER  
occurred.*

# TYPES OF HOMICIDE

**CRIMINAL HMCD**: legally classified as MURDER

~ **1<sup>st</sup> Dgr**: premeditation involved

~ **2<sup>nd</sup> Dgr**: spontaneous

**JUSTIFIABLE HMCD**: indiv believes they're @ risk of being killed/seriously injured & the ONLY salvation is to kill the assailant

**EXCUSABLE HMCD**: when event results in the unanticipated & unintended death of another person (*death result of lawful act carried out in a lawful way*) – ex. Police shooting/death during “heat of passion”

# FOR PATHOLOGY INVSTGTN

The CASE FOLDER contains:

1. documentation of scene & circumstances

~ pics, diagrams, txts

2. autopsy report

~ interpretations & conclusions based on **SOUND** medical principles & cognition

# DOCUMENTATION

the **FIRST** step to forensic problem solving

## How do you document?

- pics
- diagrams & measurements to show relationships of objects
- autopsy diagrams
  - ~ rough notes (diagrams + “notes to self”)
  - ~ clarification diagrams (aka final draft = no notes)

# The Autopsy Report

- Goal oriented & based on needs of investigators
- Present in a **CLEAR & LOGICAL** order

## REPORT OF AUTOPSY

Name: SCHIAVO, Theresa  
Date of Death: March 31, 2005

Case #5050439 Age: 41 Yrs. Race: White Sex: Female  
Date of Autopsy: April 01, 2005 at: 0840 hrs

## AUTOPSY FINDINGS

1. Anoxic-ischemic encephalopathy (see attached neuropathology report)
  - a. Extremity muscle atrophy and contractures
  - b. Bilateral bronchopneumonia
  - c. Osteoporosis (with T11 endplate fracture)
  - d. Urolithiasis
  - e. Renal scar (right)
  - f. Heterotopic ossification
  - g. Degenerative joint changes
  - h. Glossal, pharyngeal, and neck muscle atrophy
  - i. Healing gastrostomy
  - j. Implanted electrical stimulator
  - k. Healed decubitus ulcer(s) and remote left fifth toe amputation
2. Dehydration
  - a. Vitreous chemistry: sodium 207 mmol/L, chloride 184 mmol/L, urea nitrogen 133 mg/dL, creatinine 1.3 mg/dL, glucose 57 mg/L
  - b. Dry skin and body cavities
  - c. Renal tubular necrosis
3. Toxicology
  - a. Heart blood: acetaminophen 8.8 mg/L
  - b. Urine: acetaminophen detected
4. Status post cholecystectomy
5. Hyperostosis frontalis interna
6. Uterine leiomyoma
7. Cardiovascular (see attached cardiovascular pathology report)
  - a. Heart weight 255 grams
  - b. Focal pericardial adhesions
  - c. Cardiac ion channel mutation screening: negative

Cause of Death: Complications of Anoxic Encephalopathy

# The Autopsy Report

1. **INTRO**: “paint a word picture” of physical characteristics & prior sk

2. **EXTERNAL & INTERNAL**:

documentation of external  
intervention, injuries, and

3. **EVID of INJURY**: CLARITY

4. **INTRNL OBSRVTN of EA**

*repeat injuries from injury section*

5. **ADDITIONAL STUDY**: list samples taken

6. **MICROSCOPIC FINDINGS**: if applicable

This is a **GENERAL**  
**guideline.**

Each place has their  
**own EXACT format that**  
**you would follow.**





- JonBenét was born in Atlanta GA in 1990 and the Ramseys lived in the Atlanta suburb of Dunwoody for several years before moving to Colorado in 1991. [JonBenét Ramsey](#) -- Early December 26, 1996, Patsy Paugh Ramsey called 911 to report JonBenét, her daughter six year-old daughter, missing from her bed and a three-page ransom note she found downstairs demanding \$118,000. Hours later, with law enforcement in the home, JonBenét's father, John B. Ramsey, found her battered, strangled body in the basement of their Boulder home. John and Patsy insist an intruder killed their daughter. Boulder police and Colorado Governor Bill Owens kept them under an "umbrella of suspicion." *CNN*

# Autopsy Report of JBR

- L – SIDE: Diagram of what she looked like
- R – SIDE: Highlight article
- Back R – SIDE: Define unknown terms