

Cardiac Cath: Hospital's Nurses Faulted For Delay In Removing Sheath.

The seventy-three year-old patient, a physician, had a cardiac catheterization procedure at the hospital.

Afterward the physician who performed the procedure told the post-operative-care nurses he wanted the sheath removed in two hours.

The sheath was not removed by the nurses until six and one-half hours after the procedure. The patient developed a groin hematoma that spread to his scrotum and caused swelling of his testicles which is expected to be permanent. One of the patient's expert witnesses, a cardiologist, testified that was a direct result of the delay in removing the sheath.

The patient's nursing expert testified that nurses are expected to follow the physician's instructions.

If there is any confusion about the orders the nurses are to contact the physician for clarification.

CIRCUIT COURT
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA
October 27, 2010

The jury in the Circuit Court, Palm Beach County, Florida awarded the patient \$650,176 as damages from the hospital. The jury expressly ruled the hospital 100% at fault for the nurses' negligence and ruled the patient's physician was not negligent.

The patient's nursing expert testified there was no room for discretion in interpreting the physicians' orders.

If the nurses did not understand the orders or had reason to question them they should have contacted the physician.

The jury discounted the hospital's argument that a groin hematoma is a complication to be expected after cardiac catheterization. **Snyder v. Boca Raton Comm. Hosp.**, 2010 WL 4926788 (Cir. Ct. Palm Beach Co., Florida, October 27, 2010).