

## Central Venous Catheter: Nurses Failed To Verify Placement.

A diabetic developmentally-disabled adult patient was admitted to the hospital's intensive care unit with a diagnosis of neuroleptic malignant syndrome.

A hospital resident decided to start a venous catheter in the patient's right leg, but reportedly inserted the catheter into the femoral artery rather than the femoral vein.

Various medications including vasoconstrictors were given through the catheter before the error was discovered. Blood clotting led to ischemia which led to tissue necrosis which eventually required amputation of the leg.

---

***The nurses should have recognized that the catheter was placed incorrectly in the femoral artery rather than the femoral vein.***

***The nurses should have examined the catheter for arterial back-flow.***

***After determining that the catheter was misplaced the nurses should have taped it off to alert other nurses not to use it, should have alerted the medical staff and should have documented the situation in their nursing progress notes.***

CIRCUIT COURT  
OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
June 18, 2009

---

The hospital reportedly argued there was no proof the incorrect placement caused the patient's arterial occlusion.

Nevertheless the hospital agreed to a \$2,100,000 settlement on behalf of the resident physician and the nurses in the patient's lawsuit filed in the Circuit Court, Oakland County, Michigan. **Hamdan v. Bell**, 2009 WL 2828000 (Cir. Ct., Oakland Co., Michigan, June 18, 2009).