

Chest Pains: Nurse Failed To Report To Physician.

The fifty-nine year-old patient was being observed in the emergency department overnight after an apparent allergic reaction to her cholesterol medication.

First thing in the morning she told the nurse she had started having chest pains. The nurse gave her Demerol and nitroglycerine but did not report to the physician.

The patient herself told the physician about her chest pains thirty minutes later when the physician came in to see her. The physician discharged her without further investigation.

Later that afternoon she died at home from cardiac arrest.

The jury in the Court of Common Pleas, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania awarded a substantial verdict to the widow, 15% of which was apportioned to the hospital as the employer of the nurse who failed to report the patient's first complaint of chest pains for which the nurse gave Demerol and nitroglycerine. **Miller v. Latrobe Area Hosp., 2009 WL 1749292 (Ct. Comm. Pl. Westmoreland Co., Pennsylvania, May 14, 2009).**