

Post-Op Care: Failure To Monitor O₂ Saturation.

After surgery to repair a hiatal hernia the sixty-two year-old patient went to a medical/surgical floor.

At 4:30 a.m. she was found unresponsive in her bed with her O₂ face mask off. Her O₂ sat had dropped to 48%.

The patient was revived, but not without brain damage that still affects her short-term memory.

The hospital and the surgeon pointed the finger of blame at each other.

The hospital claimed the surgeon erred not writing orders for the patient to go to the ICU post-operatively where she would have had continuous one-to-one nursing attention.

The surgeon claimed, as there was nothing in the nursing progress notes for four hours before the patient was found unresponsive, the hospital's nurses failed in their basic responsibility to monitor their patient's status.

After the hospital paid a settlement of \$1,000,000 the patient elected not to proceed trial against the surgeon in the Supreme Court, Albany County, New York. **Lance v. Moores, 2007 WL 1977077 (Sup. Ct. Albany Co., New York, May 29, 2007).**