Forensic Pathology Guided Notes (Answers)

1. “In modern times, pathology has been expanded to include the study of disease by analytical laboratory methods.”

2. The main difference between forensic pathology and pathology is the purpose for which the pathology is being done.

3. Forensic pathology is the determination of the cause and manner of death in cases of suspicious or unexplained death.

4. A forensic pathologist has about 14 years of training. (4 years undergrad, 4 years medical school, 4 to 6 years internship and residency)

5. The major duties are:
   • To determine the apparent cause of death
   • To determine (estimate) the postmortem interval (PMI) time of death
   • Determine manner of death
   • Determine identity of the deceased

6. A medicolegal autopsy is a postmortem investigation of body.

7. The “crown” became the coroner in the USA.

8. The physician (medical doctor) is the one responsible for determining manner and cause of death.

9. Death investigation process: 1) medical examiner or coroner comes to death scene, 2) collect data to determine
Postmortem interval (PMI), 3) body is turned over to a Death investigation team, 4) body goes to morgue

10. “Every state requires that a death certificate be issued for every death that happens in each jurisdiction.

11. “The trauma or injury or the disease which resulted in Cessation of life is the cause of death.”

12. There is a **Primary** cause and a **Contributing** cause of Death in some cases.

13. Mechanism of death is the actual physical, physiological, or chemical event that brings on the cessation of life.

14. “Manner of death” is the set of circumstances that existed at the time the death was caused.

15. The four (4) manners of death are homicide, natural Causes, accidental, or suicide.

16. Autopsy – “to see with one’s own eyes.”

17. The kin of the deceased must give permission for an autopsy to be done.

18. The important characteristics of a medicolegal autopsy involves examining the body to determine Cause and manner of death PLUS searching the body for physical evidence to identify the victim As well as try to identify the perpetrator.

19. Autopsies are looking for trace evidence that includes hairs and fibers, dirt and skin under nails, gunshot residues, small wounds that have forensic significance, and patterns of injury.
20. The body is extensively photographed clothed and unclothed. Wounds and trauma are noted. Autopsies look for entry and exit wounds from gunshots as well as defensive wounds.

21. The four (4) patterns of injury in violent deaths are: 1) mechanical, 2) thermal, 3) electrical, 4) chemical.

22. Examples of mechanical injuries are gunshots, stabbings, blunt force traumas from motor vehicle accidents and falls.

23. General blunt force wounds cause lacerations. Incised wounds are caused by sharp implements and leave sharp edges. Lacerations leave ragged edge wounds. Perforated wounds are when gunshots or other projectiles enter and leave the body.

24. Stippling is when particles of unburned and partially burned propellant lodges in the skin (gunshot cases).

25. Stippling lets medical examiners know how close the victim was to the shooter when they were shot.

Vocabulary: (These should be defined in your notebook)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Algor mortis</th>
<th>Embalming</th>
<th>Mechanism of death</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anatomic pathology</td>
<td>Exhumation</td>
<td>Medical examiner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autopsy</td>
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<td>Medicolegal autopsy</td>
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<td>Cause of death</td>
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<td>Clinical pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coroner</td>
<td>Manner of death</td>
<td>Rigor mortis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stippling</td>
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