

Sudden Death of a Cocaine Body Packer: An Autopsy Examination Findings

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Abstract : Body packing is a way of transfer drugs across the international border or any drug prohibited area. The drugs are usually hidden in body packets inside the anatomical body cavities like mouth, intestines, rectum, ear, vagina etc. Cocaine is a very common drug for body packing across the world. A 48 year old male was reported dead in his hotel after complaining of chest pain and vomiting. At autopsy, there were eighty-two white cylindrical body packs in the stomach, small and large intestines. Seals of few of the packets were opened. Toxicological examination revealed presence of cocaine in the stomach, liver, kidney and hair samples. Microscopically, presence of myocardial necrosis with interstitial oedema along with hypertrophy and fibrosis of the myocardial fibre suggested heart failure due to cocaine cardio toxicity. However, focal lymphocyte infiltration and perivascular fibrosis in the myocardium also indicated chronic cocaine toxicity of the deceased. After careful autopsy examination it was considered the victim was died due congestive heart failure secondary to acute and chronic cocaine poisoning.

Keywords : cardiac failure, cocaine, body packer, sudden death

Conference Title : ICFS 2016 : International Conference on Forensic Sciences

Conference Location : Paris, France

Conference Dates : August 22-23, 2016