

Medical autopsy

A forensic autopsy must not be confused with a medical autopsy. Medical autopsies are requisitioned by the treating physician. Next of kin has the right to refuse a medical autopsy.

Autopsies are performed at the Department of Pathology, Oslo University Hospital, Ullevål. The purpose of the autopsy is to explain the disease, assess aspects related to diagnosis and treatment, and to learn more about the cause of death.

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Forensic autopsy of organ donors

Oslo University Hospital



This is information for family members of a deceased patient and organ donor, in cases where the police have requested a forensic autopsy.

Why a forensic autopsy?

When death occurs unexpectedly or of an unknown cause, or is considered accidental, the police may request a forensic autopsy. The purpose of the autopsy is to determine the cause of death and conduct medical examinations that may determine the cause of the death.

The police decide whether a forensic autopsy will be performed. Family members can not refuse a forensic autopsy.

Forensic autopsy and Organ Donation

A forensic autopsy would normally not prevent an organ donation. The deceased will be transported to surgery for organ removal and then taken to the Department of Forensic Medicine at Rikshospitalet. The deceased will remain there until the forensic autopsy has been performed.

All medical equipment will be retained until the autopsy is finished, including tubes, catheters, needles, etc.

In between the organ removal and the forensic autopsy, viewing normally is not possible because the deceased is in police custody.

When will the deceased be released by the police?

The police will inform next of kin when the body of the deceased will be released for viewing and burial, after the forensic autopsy has been completed. A forensic autopsy will delay the opportunity to view the deceased by several days.

Viewing after a forensic autopsy

The hospital chaplain may assist with information about release and the possibility for viewing of the deceased.

The hospital chaplain at Oslo University Hospital (OUS) can be reached at: +47 91170892.

In most cases the viewing of the deceased will take place at OUS Ullevål Hospital. The chapel can be used by people of all faiths and beliefs.

In special cases regarding children and organ donors viewing may take place at OUS Rikshospitalet.



Viewing locally at the home place

The funeral agency of your choice can also arrange a viewing, either at the hospital chapel or near your home. Note that you must pay for their services.

The forensic autopsy is covered by the government. Next of kin must, as in all cases of death, contact a funeral agency and cover the expenses for transportation and funeral of the deceased.

Information about results of the forensic autopsy

Results of the autopsy will be sent to the police. The police decide if, when and which results that may be given to next of kin. Normally it takes 3 to 4 months to complete all analyses to determine the cause of death.

More information about forensic autopsy may be found and is available in Norwegian. This include contact information to different police districts:

[Pårørendeinformasjon - Oslo universitetssykehus HF \(oslo-universitetssykehus.no\)](https://www.oslo-universitetssykehus.no/fag-og-forskning/nasjonale-og-regionale-tjenester/rettsmedisinske-fag/rettspatologi-og-klinisk-rettsmedisin/parorendeinformasjon):

<https://www.oslo-universitetssykehus.no/fag-og-forskning/nasjonale-og-regionale-tjenester/rettsmedisinske-fag/rettspatologi-og-klinisk-rettsmedisin/parorendeinformasjon>

Police (non emergency)
phone number: 02800