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A New Era in Forensic Investigation-Virtual Autopsy

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Abstract

Autopsy is the examination of bodies after death, where whole surface of the body as well as all the body cavities are explored to record the findings. While doing so we have to collect all the possible findings which will help in establishing the circumstances leading to the death like cause of death, mode and manner of death etc. and also help the law enforcing agencies. The classical or conventional autopsy technique involves the traditional means of external examination and involves 'invasive body opening' procedure to examine all internal organs. Now new radiological imaging methods, such as multi detector computed tomography (MDCT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) have become a recent addition to autopsy workflow and can even modify the classical 'body opening' autopsy to a new field of 'non invasive' or 'minimally invasive' autopsy procedure. This high-tech method of postmortem examination which becomes popular in some countries is known as 'virtual autopsy' or 'virtopsy' or 'digital autopsy'.

Keywords: Virtual autopsy, Digital autopsy, Virtopsy, Non invasive autopsy, Minimally invasive autopsy, magnetic resonance imaging, multi detector computed tomography.