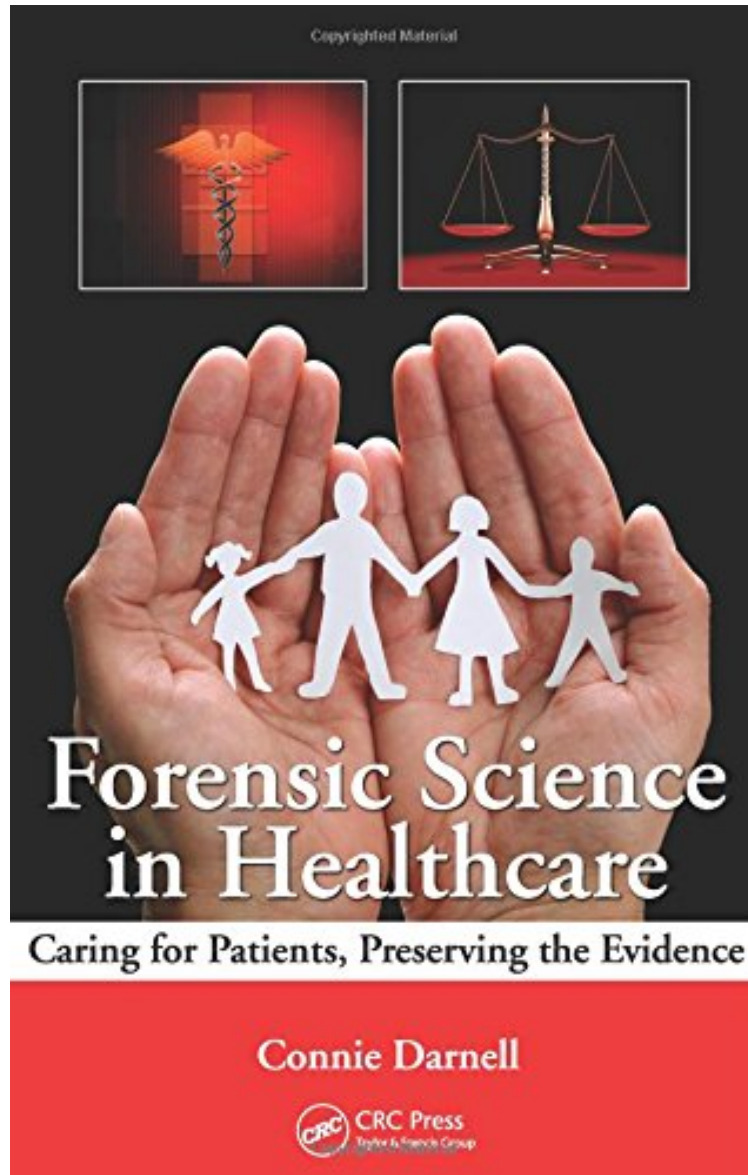


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# Forensic Science in Healthcare: Caring for Patients, Preserving the Evidence

Connie Darnell

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First responders confronted by forensic cases are forced to consider the competing concerns of administering proper medical treatment while at the same time safeguarding vital evidence. Forensic Science in Healthcare: Caring for Patients, Preserving the Evidence presents precise on-scene protocol designed to ensure that the actions of the response team provide the necessary care and yet maintain the integrity of the evidence for legal purposes. Following an introduction to forensics, the book explains how to recognize and identify patients with forensic issues, offers guidelines on proper documentation, and provides tips on forensic photography and capturing critical images. It reviews basic principles of evidence collection before moving into specific case scenarios, including domestic violence, sexual assault, child and elder abuse, youth violence, and death investigation. The book also examines occupational concerns for forensic personnel as well as legal issues such as testifying in depositions and in court. Enhanced with photographs, illustrations, templates for documentation, and case-specific recommendations, this one-stop reference provides first responders with practical understanding of the steps that should be followed to ensure not only patient protection but evidence preservation.

". . . an excellent resource for all healthcare providers and right on target for our EMS colleagues."Philip J. Froman, MD, FACEP,EMS Medical Director, Albuquerque, New Mexico "This quick reference guide is a resource of fundamentals for first responders confronted with forensic cases. Law enforcement officers, fire personnel, EMTs, nurses and physicians will find precise instructions for on-scene actions to ensure that valuable forensic evidence is properly safeguarded. The author has distilled the essentials for those who do not have the time to wade through a lot of peripheral nice to know information to find immediate answers for the forensic scenario at hand. Occupational health and safety issues are also addressed. Color illustrations, charts, tables, references and online resources amplify the text and provide useful guidance for field personnel. If you can have only one quick reference manual, it should be this one!"Janet Barber Duval, Forensic Nurse "Well-organized chapters with plenty of key points, photographs, illustrations, references, tools, and information help empower health care professionals to protect patients entrusted to their care. This book is an excellent resource for all first responders, but it is also a must-read for nurses at all levels in all settings. The author does an excellent job of incorporating forensic information with nursing observation and documentation. Managers will find valuable information for developing policies and procedures and the tools necessary to help staff members protect the forensic patients legal rights in the health care setting."Phyllis J. Fawcett, Regional Clinical Informaticist, Community Health Systems, Franklin, Tennessee, in Journal of Operating Room NursesAbout the AuthorConnie Darnell is an operating room nurse at Los Alamos Medical Center in New Mexico.