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Real Horror Stories of HIV/AIDS Doctors Behaving Badly (if you have more, contact us, and we'll add them)

Blame the Patient, Not the Prescription

One patient who had been religiously taking his AIDS drugs was told by his doctor that his liver enzyme levels had gone high and the medication would have to be changed otherwise his liver would pack up. He subsequently sent him to get an X-ray . On the way the patient stopped to take a look at the notes he'd been given to hand over. He was shocked to discover that instead of the patient's imminent liver failure being blamed on drug toxicity it was instead blamed on 'patient non-compliance'. In other words, the doctor had transferred blame from the drug to the patient. This may have been a scenario where the doctor was deliberately under-recording drug toxicity for some reason and ensuring that the patient's records matched what he was reporting somewhere else for audit purposes. Most people of course never actually look at their medical records so in most cases he'd get away with it. The patient was too frightened to take any action.

Make Up Medical Science

One pregnant patient was declining to take AIDS drugs while pregnant and didn't want AIDS drugs given to her baby when born either. The doctor, in a bid to persuade her, told her that all the children born HIV positive who were not given AIDS drugs died of pneumonia in the first year. The Doctor didn't have evidence to support that claim which is simply not true, so when the patient's attorney attended a visit with the patient, the doctor denied ever having made such an extravagant claim in the first place. Pregnancy itself can cause false HIV positives. Today, the mother and the child both test HIV negative.

Fabricate False Medical Records

One patient had experienced extremely severe symptoms immediately after starting AIDS drugs. The way she was handled by the AIDS specialist clinic was seriously negligent. After less than a week she stopped taking them against the advice of the doctors because her symptoms were so bad she feared she would die if she continued taking them any longer. When starting legal action and was looking at her medical notes she was shocked to see documents that indicated she'd had almost identical symptoms a year previously when not taking those drugs, as if a deliberate attempt was being made to shift the blame for the side-effects on something else. The patient just stared at the documents, trying to find some justified reason for them that did not include deliberate fraud, and said in disbelief, "But he was my friend."

Informed Consent? What's That?

one elderly patient was in hospital recovering from pneumonia – for known reasons unrelated to HIV – and declined to have AIDS drugs in front of both medical staff and witnesses saying she wanted more time to think about it. When she was given her nightly pills she asked what the new one was and was told one night it was for Shingles and another night it was for constipation. It made her very unwell and the day after the second dose she asked the Matron, who admitted it was one of the AIDS nurse's drugs. It turned out to be Atripla. The patient said, "You mean I've been duped?". Having been previously very trusting of medical professionals she subsequently suffered panic attacks that made her seriously unwell that she admitted to me were due to not feeling able to trust doctors any more.

One Hekuva Typo

Another patient had suggested to his doctor bringing his attorney to a discussion about his diagnosis and recommended treatment. The doctor point black declined saying he was perfectly clear about his position and didn't need to discuss it with anyone. When the patient got their medical notes, it had a letter to another doctor saying the complete opposite – that the doctor had suggested having a meeting with the person assisting the patient but it had been declined, and wondering if the patient had a history of mental illness!! The patient rang me as soon as he read this, stunned at such a blatant lie was written in his medical notes. After being challenged the doctor wrote an apology, calling it a 'typo'. It appears the word 'typo' now means "A blatant lie I thought I'd get away with but have had to correct because I was found out".