

# Forensic dentistry as a morphological exercise in the medico-legal investigation of death [La Odontología forense como un ejercicio de morfología en la investigación medicolegal de la muerte]

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In forensics, the nature of collected evidence makes analysis in many disciplines complex. Each type of trace evidence requires a unique systematic approach, and even though these approaches are significantly based on the size and morphology of the evidence being examined. In 1999, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers adopted the Recommendation No. R (99)3 on the harmonization of medico-legal autopsies. This document promoted the adoption of internationally recognized and standardized protocols for forensic autopsies. Nevertheless, the interdisciplinary philosophy still needs integration of information from various investigative sources. An orientated and correct examination of the oral cavity requires specific knowledge of its anatomy and physiopathology, and of the procedures most adapted for its study, and thus the participation of a qualified odontologist is advisable. On the basis that there is not a current protocol that establishes the participation of the dentist during all medico-legal autopsies, we present a review based on that significant document, including reports and personal findings of oral injury patterns. Finally, a new paradigm on the participation of the forensic dentist in the medico-legal investigation of death is discussed.

Autopsy protocols: Medico-Legal investigation of death

Forensic dentistry

Morphology

Oral injuries