



THE COLLEGES OF MEDICINE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Incorporated Association not for gain  
Reg No 1955/000003/08

Examination for the Diploma in Forensic Medicine of the  
College of Forensic Pathologists of South Africa – Clinical Pathology



27 August 2015

Paper 1

(3 hours)

*All questions are to be answered. Each question to be answered in a separate book (or books if more than one is required for the one answer)*

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- 1 Discuss your approach to the post mortem examination of a case of alleged child abuse with mention of the possible injuries that may be expected and the responsibilities of the forensic medical practitioner should this be confirmed. [25]
- 2 Briefly discuss the patterns of injury of an unrestrained driver involved in a frontal impact motor vehicle accident. [15]
- 3 A 2-year-old girl is found dead inside a car in a parking lot in the middle of summer. Her mother left her there to go shopping. Briefly discuss the most probable cause of death, how it came about and the signs that you will look for during your autopsy. [15]
- 4 Write short notes on
  - a) Rigor Mortis. (5)
  - b) Post mortem cooling of the body. (5)
  - c) Post mortem hypostasis. (5)[15]
- 5
  - a) Write short notes on paraffin poisoning. (5)
  - b) List the different types of intracranial haemorrhages that may be seen at autopsy. (5)
  - c) List any five (5) Statutes pertaining to the performance of a medico-legal autopsy. (5)[15]
- 6
  - a) Briefly describe the methods of gestational age determination in the post mortem examination of the body of a “dumped”/“discarded” newborn infant, where there has been concealment of birth. (8)
  - b) Write short notes on the value and uses of post mortem radiology in medico-legal death investigations. (7)[15]



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Paper 2

(3 hours)

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- 1 A 23-year-old pregnant woman received medication to assist with her requested abortion from an undisclosed clinic and was sent home thereafter. She developed abdominal pains and vaginal bleeding after a few days and subsequently delivered a seemingly live infant before arriving at the clinic where you are stationed as a district clinical forensic practitioner. You examine and declare the newborn as dead. With regards to this scenario, please answer the following questions
- a) What are the medico-legal issues at stake here and how will you handle this situation? (15)
  - b) What relevant legislation will apply to this scenario and briefly outline the relevant stipulations? (10)
- [25]
- 2 Write short notes on the following topics
- a) The rights of any arrested, detained or accused person as set out in the Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). (5)
  - b) Under which circumstances and for what reasons should a form J88 be completed and by whom? What common “mistakes” should be avoided when completing a form J88? (10)
- [15]
- 3 Write short notes on the following topics
- a) The obligations and duties of a medical practitioner in a case of suspected child abuse. (8)
  - b) The typical signs and patterns of injury to the skin that are characteristic or suspicious, in a case of suspected child abuse. (7)
- [15]
- 4
- a) Tabulate the differences in mechanisms of causation and appearances of skin lacerations and incised wounds. (5)
  - b) Write short notes on skin bruises with specific reference to causation and clinical ageing. (5)
  - c) Tabulate the survival times of spermatozoa in the different penetrable body orifices as well as on clothing. (5)
- [15]

- 5 Using the blood and urine alcohol curves, briefly describe the pharmacokinetics of alcohol and explain what Mellanby effect is using the same diagram. [15]
- 6 a) List the common forms of torture. (5)  
b) Write short notes on the difficulties surrounding medico-legal investigations of suspected torture in detention. (10)  
[15]