

September 20, 2005

Colorado Podiatric Medical Association
1301 Pennsylvania #250
Denver CO 80203

RE: Advisement to the members of the CPMA

Dear Colleagues:

As you are aware, the role of the Colorado Podiatry Board (Board) is to provide a peer review for the purpose of public protection. The members of the Board do not take this responsibility lightly.

Recently, the Board reviewed a case that involved a "routine forefoot procedure." A month after the surgery, the patient began developing vague symptoms. A month or so after these symptoms became clinically apparent the patient suffered death from a pulmonary embolism. This was an unfortunate event that could happen to any who operate.

To the extent that doctors of podiatric medicine have ever expanding privileges and are performing increasingly complex procedures, it is our responsibility to educate the patient on symptoms that could result in complication.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Board that the Colorado Podiatric Medical Association (CPMA) increase the benchmark standard of care in our State by providing its members with a detailed list of potential surgical complications and their associated symptoms. This is to ensure surgeons provide their patients with tools to recognize potential complications and allow them to contact their surgeon before it results in morbidity or fatality.

Certainly, we do not feel that it is the responsibility of the CPMA to itemize every potential complication, but rather those symptoms that may lead to devastating consequences if gone untreated. Some of these may include: infection, deep venous thrombosis, over sedation with narcotics causing respiratory distress, and others. We feel very strongly that the onus of responsibility for asking the right question is that of the treating physician. The podiatric physician has training to solicit responses, to properly qualify and diagnose, and eventually treat those symptoms avoiding complication. It is **not** the responsibility of the patient to tell the surgeon that "they are experiencing pulmonary embolism symptoms" without being appropriately solicited by the treating surgeon. It is the Board's desire that we raise the standard of care in our State to reflect the increased responsibilities that we all share in performing these sometimes-complex surgical reconstructions.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact the Board in writing, as we want to work together to promote safety for our patients in this state.

Respectfully,

THE MEMBERS OF THE COLORADO PODIATRY BOARD

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