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Chapter 7.

THE INCIDENCE OF ANESTHESIA DRUG ERRORS and THE WEBSTER NUMBER.

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A. INTRODUCTION.

Six very prominent facts are involved here that make the problem of managing and preventing anesthesia drug errors a high-priority problem to resolve.

First, anesthesia drug errors have a great propensity to cause death or severe life-changing injury to anesthesia patients if unintentionally administered at the wrong time, in the wrong route, in the wrong dose, or as the wrong drug.

Second, it is noteworthy that anesthesia drugs are used in many countries for state executions of criminals because of anesthesia drugs' inherent efficacy to cause instant death and irreversible fatal injury, as the objective is with execution.

Third, the causes of anesthesia drug errors are complex and without simple solutions.

Fourth, anesthesia drug errors easily escape observation and recognition (discovery) by the well-intended anesthesiologist who continues caring for the patient, ignorant that a drug administration error happened.

Fifth, an anesthesia drug error can be intentionally hidden from discovery by the anesthesiologist, fearing their loss of reputation, job, and finances and, in addition, fearing being litigated against.

Sixth, a meaningful reduction in medication errors in general, specifically anesthesia drug administration errors, has resisted all efforts for 50 years. This indicates (a) the poorly addressed aspect of human nature and (b) the insolubility of fixing the prime problem of poor label policies by manufacturers.

(The book's full chapter is 36 pages long with 123 references. The most famous and credible anesthesia drug administration error rate is the WEBSTER NUMBER of recognized errors of 1 per 133 anesthetics.)