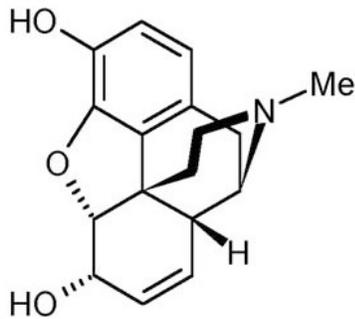


# Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

## Authorities Investigate North Carolina Nursing Home After Lab Test Determines Patient's Death Related To Morphine Overdose



*Posted at 5:50 AM on May 11, 2010 by Jonathan Rosenfeld*

Officials at the North Carolina Bureau of Investigation are looking into the nursing care provided to patients at the Britthaven of Chapel Hill nursing home after laboratory tests confirmed that the death of an Alzheimer's patient may have been related to a morphine overdose.

The investigation was triggered after the blood lab results determined that an 84-year-old patient at the facility had 'toxic' levels of morphine in her body at the time of her death.

Lab results revealed that the nursing home patient had morphine levels of more than 50,000 nanograms per milliliter at the time of her death. Putting that number in perspective, federal regulations concerning employment screenings categorize lab result over 2,000 nanograms per milliliter as 'positive'.

What makes this matter particularly alarming is the fact that no physician ever ordered morphine for this patient and other patients in the Alzheimer's units at Britthaven similarly tested positive for morphine without any physician orders.

Jonathan Rosenfeld represents victims of nursing home abuse and neglect throughout the country. For more information please visit Nursing Homes Abuse Blog ([www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com](http://www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com)), Bed Sore FAQ ([www.bedsorefaq.com](http://www.bedsorefaq.com)) or call Jonathan directly at (888) 424-5757.

This incident is not the first time investigators have questioned the care provided to patients at the Chapel Hill, NC nursing home. Britthaven has the dubious distinction of earning a spot on the government's 'Special Focus Facility' list after regulators found multiple safety violations in 2008 and 2009.

### Morphine Use In Nursing Homes

Morphine is a powerful narcotic pain reliever that is made from opium. Like most powerful narcotics, morphine can only be prescribed by a physician and must be carefully dispensed in order to avoid addiction and overdose.

Particularly in the elderly, morphine dosages must be strictly adhered to in order to prevent overdoses which can easily kill a patient due to the cellular changes the drug brings about in the body that alter breathing patterns.

[Britthaven](#) operates many nursing homes, assisted living facilities and rehabilitation centers in North Carolina, Kentucky and Virginia.

Related:

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['Significant Medication Errors' Discovered In Nursing Home Following Investigation Related To Patient Injury & Death](#)

[Improper Drug Dosage, Wrong Medication, Interactions With Other Drugs.... May Be The Result Of Pharmaceutical Malpractice](#)

[Nursing Home Patients Continue To Receive Drugs Associated With Known Dangers](#)

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