

WHAT IS INFORMED CONSENT?

What does the doctor have to tell you about the possible complications of your medical treatment? A patient has the right to exercise control over his or her body by making an informed decision concerning whether to have a particular medical procedure. If a doctor recommends a particular procedure, the doctor has a duty to disclose to the patient all material risks involved in the procedure.

Under Iowa law, a written consent to any medical or surgical procedure should contain the following information: (1) the nature and purpose of the procedure; (2) the known risks, if any, of death, brain damage, quadriplegia, paraplegia, the loss or loss of function of any organ or limb, or disfiguring scars associated with the procedure; and (3) the probability of the occurrence of the risk if it can be reasonably determined.

Whenever you are going to receive medical treatment, if you are capable, take time to ask the doctor specific questions about the recommended medical treatment. Ask the doctor to explain the procedure and the risks of the procedure in language you can understand. Ask the doctor how you should feel after the procedure. If there are potential complications associated with the medical procedure, ask the doctor what signs and symptoms you will experience for each of the complications which can occur. To make an informed consent about a medical procedure, it is important for you to take an active role in becoming informed. Ask questions until you, and the doctor, are fully informed.

Most of the medical care that is provided to patients is excellent. Unfortunately, there are times when the medical care provided just doesn't seem to have been right. If you believe the medical treatment you or some family member received was negligent you may want to consult with a lawyer who specifically handles those types of cases to help you investigate as to whether the medical care and treatment provided was appropriate.

FREDD J. HAAS LAW OFFICES, P.C.
Fredd J. Haas
Attorney at Law
President, Iowa Trial Lawyers
Association 1997 - 1998

Fredd J. Haas
5001 Southwest Ninth Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50315
Telephone: (515) 256-6301
Toll Free: 1-888-338-6535
www.iowainjuryattorney.com