

POSTER 145

The viability assured by the chain of custody

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Resumo

Introduction: The chain of custody begins when the evidence is found and ends when it is presented in court [1]. All this process demands a passaging through the lab for analyses. A sample under custody is, by definition, evidence that has a restricted access, to prevent tampering, it is necessary to assure its viability. Therefore, all the responsibility falls to the people that are in contact with the sample and, in order to allow the identification, in each change that the evidence is exposed to, it is mandatory the signing of the responsible person [2]. **Objetives:** The objective of this study is the understanding of the concept known as chain of custody in the legal medicine context, as well as the importance of a proper execution. **Methods:** A research was conducted in the data base PubMed utilizing the key words: Chain Of Custody; Evidence Collection; Discrepancies. **Results:** The selection, harvest, storing and transport stages are of the utmost importance, but depending on the context, the victim may also carry evidence. Consequently, the

process of preservation is important, not only the use of adequate material to avoid the degradation of the DNA, but also the victim must be informed about the practices the must be avoided until the examination is concluded [3]. Effectively, it was mentioned that the results may also be affected in the analyses level, either by the temperature that they are exposed to but also by a late analysis. It was also observed that there is a higher percentage of positive cases when the harvest occurs within 24 hours [4]. **Conclusions:** The chain of custody procedures can be adapted to the circumstances, but its universal that the fail of a procedure is a source of error. Consequently, its evident that it may directly affect the chain of custody, in a way that, the sample might become invalid to the process. Therefore, the tampering may occur in the preservation stage of the sample but also in the testing stage. All this makes the invalidity of the results possible, but may also lead to false conclusions and interpretations. [1,4]

Keywords: chain of custody; evidence collection; forensic sciences.

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