

What Is A Never Event?

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What They Are

What is a “never event”? A “never event” is, as the name suggests, a medical error that should never occur while under the care of a medical professional. Medicare and Medicaid do not provide coverage (will not pay) for never events because they are considered preventable and avoidable. There are currently 7 categories of never events.

7 Never Event Categories

- 1. Surgical or procedural events** Examples include surgery on the wrong part of the body; anesthesiology complications; and foreign objects inside the patient during a procedure.
- 2. Product or device events** Examples include treating a patient with contaminated drugs and using medical equipment in a different way than intended.
- 3. Patient protection events** Examples include patient suicide while under medical care; patient death related to a disappearance while under medical care; and patient discharge to an unauthorized or incompetent individual.
- 4. Care management events** Examples include stage 3 and 4 decubitus ulcers; death during a low-risk pregnancy while under medical care; and patient death caused by failure to follow-up with pathology and/or radiology.
- 5. Environmental events** Examples include patient injuries caused by bedrails and patient burns acquired while under medical care.
- 6. Radiologic events** Examples include injury or death caused by metal object in the MRI area.
- 7. Criminal events** Examples include sexual assault in health care premises; impersonation of a medical professional; and battery in health care premises.

If you still find yourself asking, what is a never event and how can I learn more, [click here](#) for the complete list all 29 never events.

The list of never events is revised often to account for changes in medical abilities and expectations.

What To Do If A Never Event Occurs

Medical facilities and care providers are working to reduce the number of never events, but even low rates of never event occurrences can have deadly consequences. Over 71% of recent never event incidents reported to the Joint Commission were fatal. It is important that your physicians follow the standard of care, providing you with the required treatment to prevent never events or addressing them when they have occurred. Though a hospital may experience a never event every few years, they are still prevalent nationally. For example, nearly 4,000 surgery-related never events happen each year in the U.S.

If you are the victim of a never event, make sure you speak to your medical provider and contact an attorney.

A Hospital's Responsibility

Medical facilities have a responsibility to report and investigate the occurrence of never events. Florida requires that medical facilities report what it calls “adverse medical incidents.” This includes never events. The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (“AHCA”) runs the AHCA Incident Reporting System, or “AIRS.” AIRS is a live database which tracks the number of adverse medical incidents in the state, broken down by facility and type of event. Additionally, when a adverse medical incident occurs, a hospital should conduct a “root cause analysis” (RCA) so that the facility can better understand how the incident happened, as well as how to avoid the same incident in the future.

The Leapfrog Group, a committee dedicated to the improvement in patient care and safety, also recommends that the hospital waive the patient’s medical costs should they experience a medical event.

What Is A Never Event Medical Malpractice Claim?

If you believe you or a family member experienced a never event or an adverse medical incident because of the negligence of hospital nurses or doctors, you may be entitled to compensation for your damages. Call Bonner Law at 1-800-4MEDMAL for a free consultation. Michael P. Bonner has over 30 years of experience representing clients in medical malpractice litigation.

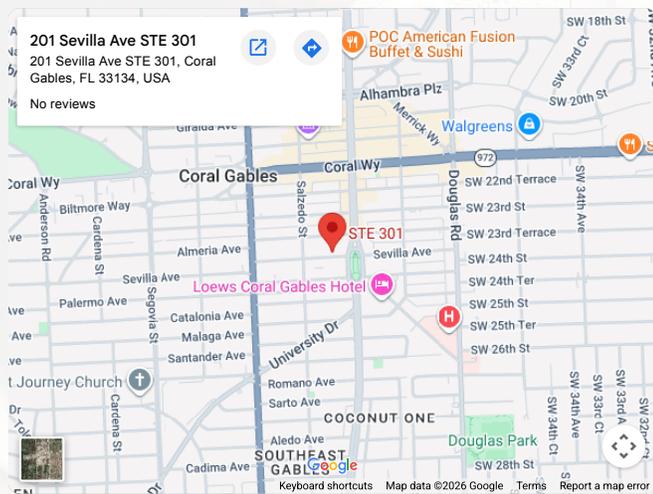
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