



# Book review: Forensic Nursing Science, 2nd Edition

By Sheila Early, RN, BScN, SANE-A

## Forensic Nursing Science 2nd Edition

By Virginia A. Lynch with  
Janet Barber Duval

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Virginia Lynch has updated her first book (*Forensic Nursing*), which was published in 2006 as the first major forensic nursing text. She has added new chapters to this recent edition, as well as updating chapters from the original text.

Three Canadians have contributed material to the book, as well. Arlene Kent Wilkinson, Associate Professor at University of Saskatchewan, wrote the chapter on forensic nursing education, Kent Stewart, Chief Coroner, Ministry of Justice, Province of Saskatchewan, wrote the chapter on asphyxia, and Sheila Early, Coordinator Forensic Health Sciences, British Columbia Institute of Technology, contributed Appendix C on procedures for sexual assault examination for male victims.

There are several chapters that directly affect the clinical practice of emergency nurses and other nurses in an acute care settings.

**Forensic investigations in the hospital** examines the role forensic nursing plays in the management of quality and risk assessments within a facility, details the need for vigilance for criminal activity internally such as drug diversion (drugs being misused or not provided to a patient, but diverted to others) and highlights the need for all nurses to be suspicious of unexpected patient deaths.

**Evidence recovery in the emergency department** provides a list of 24 different patient categories that are forensic in

nature. These include the obvious: the sexually assaulted patient, the abused elder and the abused child, but also include occupational injuries, transportation injuries, abuse of the disabled, sharp force injuries, product liability, organ and tissue donation, firearms injuries, gang violence and all burns over 5% of body surface to list a few. There are detailed forensic evidence collection guidelines for the emergency department including a chain of custody document.

**Blunt, sharp and firearm injuries** is a must-read for emergency nurses, defining the difference between the different forms of blunt and sharp trauma with documentation tips for charting findings in a clear, concise and complete manner.

**Child maltreatment and elder maltreatment** chapters detail the indicators that nursing can use to identify possible victims of maltreatment.

**Relationship crimes, sexual violence: Victims and offenders and sequelae of sexual violence** chapters address the common issues of sexual violence and crimes.

**Global expansion and future perspectives** discusses the current status of forensic nursing in a variety of countries including Canada. It also describes the potential for forensic nurses to change the health care response to violence, crime and trauma.

Other topics of interest to the emergency nurse include: asphyxia, electrical, thermal and inhalation injuries, suicidal behaviour and risk assessment, sudden death during restraint: excited delirium syndrome and human trafficking.

Emergency nurses who care for patients seeking care following an incident of

crime, violence or trauma (or often all three) will find this text extremely useful as a reference guide. Forensic nurses will find the text an updated and expanded version of the first edition.

## About the author



*Sheila Early, RN, BScN, SANE-A. I am currently the coordinator of an Advanced Specialty Certificate in Forensic Health Sciences at British Columbia Institute of Technology.*

*It was the first classroom-delivered certificate in Canada when I developed it in 2005. I teach in three of the four forensic health sciences courses within the certificate, as well as doing workshops and courses in other provinces, particularly sexual assault nurse examiner courses that I have taught in five provinces. I was an emergency nurse from 1970 until 2000 when I became a forensic nurse!*

*I have been a NENA member since 1985 and have been active in both Saskatchewan and B.C. provincial groups in a variety of capacities.*

*I have been a member of the International Association of Forensic Nurses since 1995 when I "found" IAFN and have been in a variety of positions with IAFN. Currently I serve as a Director-at-Large International.*

*I am one of the four founding members of the Forensic Nurses Society of Canada, which worked to achieve status with Canadian Nurses Association as a subspecialty of nursing in Canada.*

*I am married with two adult daughters and have three grandchildren who are the joys of my life!*