

## The Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) Foundation Asks What Happened to "First Do No Harm?"

Written by Australian Business

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( [PRLEAP.COM](http://PRLEAP.COM) ) February 13, 2014 - The announcement Monday that 18 patients have been placed at risk of contracting the fatal brain disease Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) through the reuse of contaminated surgical instruments by Forsyth Medical Center in Winston Salem, NC begs the question, what happened to the Hippocratic oath: "First, Do No Harm?"

Caused by misfolded proteins that then collect in the brain of the patients, CJD is at exponentially greater risk of transmission if brain surgery is performed without proper precautions. "These proteins will adhere to the surgical instruments," explains Florence Kranitz, President of the [CJD Foundation](http://CJD Foundation) . "Unfortunately, standard sterilization procedures will not render the instruments safe for reuse, so they then become agents of transmission." The specific surgical instrument sterilization guidelines are readily available to surgeons and hospitals on the websites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/cjd/qa\\_cjd\\_infection\\_control.htm#reprocessed](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/cjd/qa_cjd_infection_control.htm#reprocessed) which includes the World Health Organization guidelines.

According to Pierluigi Gambetti, M.D., neuropathology professor at Cleveland's Case Western Reserve University and Director of the National Prion Disease Pathology Surveillance Center, "To prevent the unnecessary spread of CJD, it is imperative that all medical professionals and medical centers be aware of the symptoms of CJD, and that they assess the inherent risks of operating on a suspected CJD patient." The lapse of infection control and subsequent exposure of 18 other patients at Forsyth Medical Center was avoidable.

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