

Contact: Russ Handler russ@newsandexperts.com

727-443-7115 Ext. 206

What Will Be The Fate of Michael Jackson's Physician, Dr. Conrad Murray?

Expert Anesthesiologist Reflects on Propofol

And Jackson's Final Hours

In the hours before his death, Michael Jackson was treated to a buffet of tranquilizers, prescription drugs and a drug that is rarely administered outside the parameters of hospital and clinic-based medical procedures -- propofol.

It's the use of that final drug, and the rumors of Jackson's love for the sleep inducer, which he called his "milk," that makes one anesthesiologist believe that the pop star's death was imminently preventable and unnecessary.

"To say that Michael Jackson's death was preventable is to say that the best way to avoid injury is not to jump off a cliff," said Dr. Barry Friedberg, a veteran anesthesiologist and author of the book **Getting Over Going Under** (www.drbarryfriedberg.com). "While there may be little difference in the logistics of administering propofol in a hospital and administering it in a private setting -- as was the case with Jackson -- it is not intended to be used as an intravenous sleeping pill. Propofol is a serious drug that is amazingly effective and gentle when used appropriately in surgical procedures. Dr. Murray was essentially enabling Jackson to use it like it was an over-the-counter pain reliever."

Dr. Friedberg, who also runs a not-for-profit advocacy group that extols the virtues of brain monitors as a standard of care device for anesthesiologists, is closely watching Dr. Murray's case. He believes that Dr. Murray, whose preliminary hearing on charges of involuntary manslaughter is set for August 23, will definitely be spending some time in prison for his role in Jackson's death.

“The only way he walks away from this is in an orange jumpsuit and irons,” said Dr. Friedberg. “Although he may not have intended to kill Jackson, Murray clearly caused Jackson’s death [involuntarily](#). What would have prevented Jackson’s death? A knowledgeable physician who, at the very least, both watched [Jackson](#) and monitored his oxygen would have not put his patient in mortal danger. If he wanted to be more responsible, he could have used a brain monitor to measure the propofol effect, and as a result, he would have prevented administering the dose that stopped Jackson’s breathing.”

According to court documents, Dr. Friedberg said some elements of the case are indisputable:

- Propofol is the last of a series of drugs Dr. Murray admitted to giving Jackson.
- Murray admitted being out of the room shortly after giving Jackson the propofol.
- Propofol is the drug the Los Angeles coroner declared was the cause of Jackson’s death.

“Let me emphatically state that since its 1989 introduction to the North American market, tens (if not hundreds) of millions of patients have safely received propofol,” he said. “It was safe because someone was watching and monitoring these patients, which represent two features apparently absent in Michael Jackson’s bedroom the day he died. Until recently, propofol has only been given by dedicated, trained anesthesia providers like anesthesiologists, nurse anesthetists or even anesthesia assistants under supervision. When given for surgery, propofol is always monitored with electrocardiogram (EKG), blood pressure and pulse oximeter (SpO₂). Neither of these devices was [apparently](#) in use when Dr. Murray administered the fatal dose. At this point, I don’t think it’s a matter if Dr. Murray is convicted. It’s a matter of when, and how long he will spend behind bars for his irresponsible and unconscionable conduct [that is a disgrace to the vast majority of practicing physicians who remain true to their oaths to do no harm.](#)”

About Dr. Barry Friedberg

A native of southeastern Pennsylvania, Barry L. Friedberg, MD, came to Palo Alto, California in 1975 to complete his formal education with an anesthesia residency at Stanford University. Following the successful completion of his

residency and the requirements of the American Board of Anesthesiology, Dr. Friedberg became a Board Certified (or Diplomate) Anesthesiologist in April 1980. He has also lectured on safer, simpler, cost-effective and better patient outcomes to anesthesiologists and surgeons in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Israel and Venezuela.

To interview Dr. Barry Friedberg or request a review copy of "**Getting Over Going Under**" contact Russ Handler at (727) 443-7115 ext. 206 or email russ@newsandexperts.com Please include your name, publication, and mailing address with your request.