

Statement of experiences when treating patients who are Jehovah's Witnesses

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My main duties are to treat patients with heart disease with invasive procedures and to plan cardiologic procedures and surgical heart treatments. During the last decades, I have been involved in treating dozens of patients who are Jehova's Witnesses. The treatments have been done with methods without blood transfusions. Usually, the cardiologic procedures have been conducted with good standard methods without problems. Such procedures include coronary angiography, coronary artery balloon angioplasty (PCI), pacemaker implantation and catheter ablation for heart arrhythmia. In some procedures, i.e. surgical heart operations, the patients have been given iron and erythropoietin to have high blood hemoglobin values before operations. In such way, there has been no severe postoperative anemia.

The discussions and experiences with Jehova's Witness patients have shown that they have good attitude to health and to healthy lifestyle, e.g. they do not smoke or use drugs, and they are willing to have good health care. They also respect life, and are reliable after agreements have been done. Before procedures that possess risk of bleeding, it has been comfortable to discuss the risk with the patients, and the procedures have then been conducted with the best treatment methods, and also according the law.

Personally, I am not a Jehova's Witness and I do not receive any financial benefit for this statement.

The Hospital Information Services for Jehova's Witnesses may use this statement when they want to tell of the principles how the medical treatments for Jehova's Witnesses are conducted in Finland.

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Kari Kervinen