

Starvation

□ Definition

Defined medically in two parts and that is the act or process of starving and the condition of being starved

Types of Starvations

①

Acute

(results from sudden stoppage of food.)

②

Chronic

(results from gradual deficient supply of food.)

Causes

- Famine (Scarcity)
- Trapped in pits, mines
- Neglect on part of parents
- Willful withholding of food
- Willful refusal to take food

Post Mortem Appearances

□ External examination

- In children, skeleton shows spinal curvature, rickets and dental defects
- Face is pale, the skin inelastic and pigmented
- Edema around ankles and inside the thighs, in wet type there is marked edema, ascites and pleural effusion
- Eyes are sunken, cheek bones appear prominent
- Hair is dry, lusterless and brittle

Post Mortem Appearances

□ External examination

- Tongue is dry and thickly coated
- Nails are brittle and ridged
- Limbs are almost skeletal
- Ribs are prominent.
- Abdomen is scaphoid
- Fat of female breast and orbit spared till late

Post Mortem Appearances

□ Internal Examination

- Loss of adipose tissue from omentum ,mesentery and perirenal fat stores
- Atrophy of organs(except brain) with reduction in size, shows changes similar to premature senility
- Heart is small from brown atrophy
- Lungs are pale and collapsed
- Stomach and intestine shows atrophy of all coats and mucosa is stained with bile

Post Mortem Appearances

□ Internal Examination

- Bowel contain offensive watery fluid and gas
- Liver is atrophied show necrosis due to protein deficiency
- Spleen is shrunken
- Gall bladder is distended with bile
- Kidneys shows atrophy of nephrons
- Blood volume is markedly reduced
- There may be some evidence of some incurrent disease

Medicolegal Importance

- ① Starvation may be homicidal, victim is usually infant, or aged.
- ① **Baby-farmer** is a condition in which children is starved by their parents and guardians.
- ① Starvation may be accidental if person is caught/entombment in mines, earthquake, or landslides
- ① Starvation may be suicidal, persons fast voluntarily for the purpose of exhibition, public attention
- ① Psychiatric cause (Paranoid schizophrenia, Senile dementia, hysteria) these persons may refuse to eat or spend money on food, clothes.

Thank you