

**SMITH v.
HOSPITAL X
AND
CHILDREN'S CLINIC**

Jane Smith was diagnosed at birth with spondyloepiphyseal dysplasia, a form of dwarfism. As is often the case with dwarfs, Jane developed an orthopaedic problem at an early age which involved an instability of the cervical spine. Her condition necessitated a cervical fusion.

Jane's parents were told not to give her anything to eat or drink past 11:00 p.m. the night before the scheduled surgery. The surgery was performed the next morning seemingly with no adverse occurrences. Jane was taken to the recovery room where she was slow to awaken from the anesthesia. After several hours someone thought to check her blood sugar. It had now been in excess of 15 hours since she had received any nourishment.

The blood sugar test indicated she was suffering from hypoglycemia. Hypoglycemia or low blood sugar is a dangerous condition and can cause brain damage just as easily as lack of oxygen. Once it was discovered Jane was hypoglycemic, a glucose solution was started and her blood sugar elevated to normal quite rapidly. However, her extended hypoglycemia had caused massive and irreversible brain damage.

Experts testified that simply running an I.V. containing glucose during the surgery or a simple monitoring of the patient's blood sugar during surgery would have prevented this disaster. In fact, a simple "finger stick" can be used to monitor blood sugar.

Jane remains completely disabled, depending on her parents for all activities of daily living, including bathing, dressing, mobility and feeding. Jane had been physically healthy in every way prior to this tragedy, and would have developed normally as a "little person."

This case was settled by Chris Searcy and Earl Denney for \$6.75 million. ■