

**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
SHERIFF-CORONER OFFICE
1585 KANSAS AVE.
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93405**

CORONER'S REPORT

FILE NO. 18938

DECEDENT: Despain, Sean David
Age: 40 DOB: 2/27/1980
[REDACTED]

RESIDENCE ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

NEXT OF KIN: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

DATE/TIME OF DEATH: 7/23/2020 @ 1110 hours (pronounced)

LOCATION OF DEATH: Residence

REGULAR PHYSICIAN: Unknown

AUTOPSY SURGEON: Dr. Joye Carter, M.D.
San Luis Obispo County Coroner's Office
1585 Kansas Ave.
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

CAUSE OF DEATH: **Complications of Combined Effects of
Cocaine, Ethanol, Trazadone, Alprazolam
and Nitrous Oxide (hours)**

MANNER OF DEATH: **Accident**

LOCAL MORTUARY: Lady Family Mortuary

INVESTIGATING AGENCY CASE#: SLOPD 200723027

ASSOCIATED CORONER'S CASE#: 2007-05450

INVESTIGATION

On 7/23/2020 at 1130 hours, Deputy Ricks was dispatched to this coroner's case. In summary her report stated the following:

Deputy Ricks responded to a coroner request from San Luis Obispo Police (SLOPD) regarding the passing of a 40-year-old male. The decedent was found unresponsive by his girlfriend. The girlfriend had taken a shower for what she believed to be 12 minutes. When she got out of the shower, the decedent was unresponsive and not breathing on the bed. 911 was called and EMS responded. The decedent was moved from the bed so EMS could have more room to work. Lifesaving efforts were unsuccessful.

The girlfriend advised she was at the residence visiting the decedent. The decedent was reported to be a regular alcohol drinker and cocaine user. The decedent also used "Whip its" recreationally. "Whip its" refers to inhaling nitrous oxide for purposes of getting high. There were four total large nitrous oxide bottles at the residence and one culinary style nitrous oxide container.

The decedent was reported to have used alcohol, cocaine, and Xanax that day. The decedent was going to go to sleep around 1030 hours according to his girlfriend. The Xanax was prescribed to the girlfriend. The decedent had taken two pills to help him sleep. The decedent had also recently been inflating a balloon with nitrous oxide to inhale. The balloon reportedly popped, and the decedent began inhaling nitrous oxide straight from the pressurized bottle.

The girlfriend got into the shower right after witnessing the decedent inhale the pressurized gas from the bottle. When she exited the shower, the decedent was unresponsive on the bed cradling the bottle of gas. The bottle was slightly open and the girlfriend could hear gas wheezing from the nozzle.

The decedent was reported to have tested positive for COVID-19 about one month prior. The decedent had no major medical conditions according to his girlfriend. The decedent was a cannabis farmer.

Scene investigation revealed no signs of assault. Cocaine, nitrous oxide, male enhancement pills, alcohol, balloons, prescription medications (prescribed to girlfriend), and sexual devices were in the immediate area of the decedent. The decedent was not clothed.

I assumed jurisdiction and investigation of the death of Sean Despain pursuant to California Government Code 27491.

I ordered an autopsy be performed on 7/23/2020. I provided Forensic Pathologist Dr. Carter with information I had obtained regarding this case. Dr. Carter examined the decedent at the Coroner's Office. At the completion of the autopsy, Dr. Carter did not provide causes of death. Dr. Carter later provided a cause of death as **Complications of Combined Effects of Cocaine, Ethanol, Trazadone, Alprazolam and Nitrous Oxide (hours)**. For details, refer to the Final Autopsy Report.

I requested police reports. After reviewing the records, I incorporated them with this file.

Coroner Case #18938
Decedent: Despain, Sean David

I collected blood, urine and vitreous humor toxicology samples and sent them to Central Valley Toxicology for analysis.

I received the toxicology report that had been processed on 7/31/2020. Refer to the Toxicology Report for quantitative values.

Represented sections of major organs were collected during autopsy and stored in formalin for future forensic purposes. Samples will be saved for one year unless otherwise noted.

During autopsy, a deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) stain card was prepared and stored at the Coroner's Office.

I later learned the suspected cocaine found on scene had tested positive for cocaine when examined by the SLO Sheriff's Office Forensic Drug Lab. SLOPD recovered suspected cocaine in two baggies from the decedent's safe during a search warrant execution later the same week. The substances found by SLOPD tested positive for ketamine and cocaine when examined by the SLO Sheriff's Office Forensic Drug Lab.

DISPOSITION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

No personal property belonging to the decedent was seized by the Coroner's Office. The decedent's clothing was provided to the mortuary. The decedent's cell phone was turned over to SLOPD for their investigation (property receipt attached).

CLOSING STATEMENT


Based upon the investigation, I certified the manner of death as **Accident** and the cause of death as **Complications of Combined Effects of Cocaine, Ethanol, Trazadone, Alprazolam and Nitrous Oxide**.

I completed and electronically signed the death certificate and amendment to the death certificate.

All medical information referred to in this report will not be released, as part of this report, because of both state and federal privacy statutes. These records will have to be obtained from the care provider.

Any law enforcement agency's report referred to in this report will not be released, as part of this report, and a copy of the report will have to be obtained from the law enforcement agency conducting the investigation.

Photographs will not be released pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure 129.



Rory Linn, Detective Coroner #1243

ARP#0397/09-29-20



San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office

1585 Kansas Avenue • San Luis Obispo • California • 93405
www.slosheriff.org

Ian S. Parkinson
Sheriff - Coroner

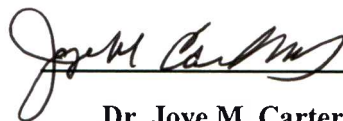
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Autopsy	<input type="checkbox"/> Partial Autopsy	<input type="checkbox"/> External Examination
NAME: Despain, Sean David		CASE # 18938
POSTMORTEM DATE: 07/23/2020		TIME: 1455 hours
INVESTIGATING AGENCY: SLOPD		CASE # unk
DATE OF DEATH: 07/23/2020		TIME: 1122 hours
AGE: 40 SEX: M		
RACE / ETHNICITY: W		

Final Autopsy Report

CAUSE OF DEATH:
 COMPLICATIONS OF COMBINED EFFECTS OF COCAINE,
 ETHANOL, TRAZODONE, ALPRAZOLAM AND NITROUS OXIDE HOURS

OTHER SIGNIFICANT CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH, BUT NOT RESULTING IN THE UNDERLYING CAUSE:

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 Dr. Joye M. Carter M.D.

28 September 2020

 DATE

Name: Despain, Sean David
Case # 18938

POSTMORTEM EXAMINATION ON THE BODY OF

Sean David Despain

HISTORY: The decedent has been identified as Sean David Despain, a forty-year-old white male with a date of birth of 02/27/1980. He was identified on scene and subsequently formally identified during the postmortem examination by Detective Rory Linn. The Detective assigned this case is Detective Rory Linn.

This case is also being investigated by the San Luis Obispo Police Department and their case number is unknown at the time of this examination.

AUTOPSY: An external and partial internal autopsy examination is performed at the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff Coroner's Office by Forensic Pathologist, Joye M. Carter M.D., pursuant to California Government Code 27491, beginning at 1455 hours on 07/23/2020. In attendance during the examination was Detective Rory Linn.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF DEATH: According to the investigative report received and reviewed, the decedent reportedly was known to abuse cocaine and inhale nitrogen daily. Four nitrogen bottles were found located in the residence. Decedent was also reported to have used Xanax and alcohol. The decedent was a cannabis farmer. Decedent was unmarried and had a girlfriend residing at the residence who called 9-1-1 when was found unresponsive. First responders attempted CPR with no success and death was pronounced at 1122 hours on 07/23/2020. Suspected cocaine was found on scene.

Decedent had no known medical condition or prescribed medication at the time of the examination.

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE: The body is presented for examination in a white body bag. Upon opening, the decedent's facial appearance is consistent with the recorded age of forty-years.

The body is initially photographed upon opening the body bag. Upon removal of medical artifact, the body is photographed on all surfaces.

The length of the body is 71" and weight of 186 pounds. The body habitus is muscular.

EVIDENCE OF MEDICAL INTERVENTION: Decedent is received with the following evidence of medical intervention. There is vascular access in the right antecubital fossa, defibrillator pads with thumper on the anterior and left lateral chest wall, there is oral pharyngeal airway in place.

CLOTHING: The body is received nude. The body is received with a ruptured blue balloon.

No other personal effects were received with the body.

Name: Despain, Sean David
Case # 18938

At the time of examination, the body is warm to the touch. Rigor mortis is just beginning in the head region and livor mortis is blanching on the posterior surface of the body.

EXTERNAL EXAMINATION

The head is covered by dark brown hair which is neatly trimmed. There are no palpable skull or facial bone fractures. Of note, there are tattoos of plant figures on the temporal regions of both sides of the head. The irides are hazel with equal round pupil diameters of 3 mm. The conjunctiva is congested without petechial hemorrhages. There is no subscleral hematoma. There is no periorbital contusion. The nasal cartilage is without fracture. The nasal mucosa is hyperemic. The nares are swabbed. Dentition is natural and in fair condition. The upper and lower frenulum are without laceration or contusion. The gumline is not hypertrophic. There are no bite marks of the tongue or buccal mucosa. No foreign material is found within the oral cavity. The right and left external auditory canals contain no unusual material. No piercings are observed. There is minimal beard and mustache hair stubble.

The neck organs are midline with no hypermobility of the cervical spine in a rotational or anterior posterior direction. There are tattoos that extend from the chest and back on to the lateral surfaces and posterior surfaces of the neck. There is no ligature or furrow marking of the anterior surface of the neck.

The chest is symmetrical. The male breasts are without mass or nipple discharge. There is a large tattoo of a tree on the left side of the chest and abdomen and flank area which extends up to the chest with multiple tattoos. There are no scars of the chest wall. There are no palpable masses. There appear to be small areas of vena puncture within the multi-color tattoos. The abdominal contour is flat and muscular.

The external genitalia are those of a normally developed adult male with long foreskin. Both testicles are descended into the scrotal sac. There are no palpable masses or scars of the lower abdominal wall. The perianal region is unremarkable.

UPPER EXTREMITIES: The upper extremities are symmetrically formed with no external rotation or fractures of the long bones. Venous track marks are not observed. There are no unusual scars. There are five digits on each hand. The fingernails are trimmed, and the nailbeds are dusky pink.

LOWER EXTREMITIES: The lower extremities are symmetrically formed with no external rotation or fractures of the long bones. There is no pedal edema. There is a transport tag around the right ankle. There are five digits on each foot. The toenails are neatly trimmed with no onychomycosis. The soles of the feet are smooth.

The posterior surface of the body is remarkable for large a tattoo which extend from the left flank to the left side of the back, a large tattoo of the central portion of the upper back and tattoos extending from the chest onto the lateral and posterior surfaces of the neck. There is an area of small vena puncture

Name: Despain, Sean David
Case # 18938

over the superior aspect of the right shoulder. There are no recent or remote surgical scars. Livor mortis is showing blanching.

On close inspection there is a CPR vena puncture wound of the right index finger.

INTERNAL EXAMINATION

A limited internal examination is conducted.

The thoracic abdominal region is explored through the usual Y shaped incision. Upon reflecting the skin laterally and superiorly, the sternum is remarkable for a fracture at T3. The ribcage is intact without fractures. The intercostal muscles are red/brown, beefy red and markedly congested.

The midline fat at the level of the umbilicus is 1" in depth. The muscular tissue in the abdominal wall is well developed.

Upon removal of the breastplate, large pools of blood are observed within the body cavities. The blood remains liquefied within the vascular tree.

Both lungs are remarkable for extensive subpleural anthracotic pigment deposition involving all three pulmonary lobes. Pleural coloration is pink and black. There are no areas of palpated consolidation or emphysematous change.

The cardiac silhouette is enlarged. The pericardial sac is intact and thin walled. The diaphragmatic leaves are intact.

The liver is red/brown, homogenous and congested.

The abdominal organs are in their normal anatomic location.

The appendix and gallbladder are in their normal location and show no evidence of malformation.

TOXICOLOGY: Samples of vitreous humor 7 ml, inferior vena cava blood 30 ml and urine from the urinary bladder, are obtained under direct visualization for toxicology testing.

A urine drug screen is positive for numerous drugs.

A DNA card is made.

There is no evidence of internal/external penetrating traumatic injury.

HISTOLOGY: Representative sections of all major organs are retained in formalin.

Name: Despain, Sean David
Case # 18938

SPECIMENS: Specimens are kept for one year unless otherwise specified with the exception of homicide specimens, which are kept indefinitely.

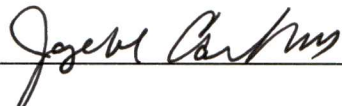
CAUSE OF DEATH: The cause of death is determined to be Complications of Combined Effects of Cocaine, Ethanol, Trazadone, Alprazolam and Nitrous Oxide (hours).

EVIDENCE: All clothing, debris from the body bag, and toxicology samples are submitted and released to the custody of San Luis Obispo Coroner's Detective investigators at the time of the examination.

COMMENT: The decedent has been identified as Sean David Despain, a forty-year-old white male with a date of birth of 02/27/1980. As additional relevant Information becomes available, the case will be re-evaluated accordingly.

LAB RESULTS

A complete drug screen is requested. Toxicology is positive for Ethyl Alcohol, Benzodiazepine, Cocaine, Levamisole and Trazodone detected in blood, vitreous and urine. Nitrous Oxide detected in blood. Refer to the CVT toxicology report for further details.



Joye M. Carter, M.D.

Forensic Pathologist



Date



Case Name:

TOXICOLOGY NUMBER:

CVT-20-7056

Despain,

Sean

Specimen Description:

25 ml IVC blood (1 gray top vial, 2 lavender top vials & 1 green cap vial), 3 ml vitreous humor & 14 ml urine each labeled "Despain, Sean; SLOSO #18938; SLO; 7/23/2020; 1455 hrs; R Linn #1243"

Delivered by Unity

Date 31-Jul-20

Received by Bill Posey

Date 31-Jul-20

Request: Complete Drug Screen & THC

Agency Case # 18938

Requesting Agency

S.L.O. Co. Sheriff's Office
Attn: Coroner's Division
835 Aerovista Pl., Ste. 130
San Luis Obispo CA 93401

Report To

S.L.O. Co. Sheriff's Office
Attn: Coroner's Division
835 Aerovista Pl., Ste. 130
San Luis Obispo CA 93401

RESULTS

Specimen: IVC Blood, Vitreous Humor and Urine Samples

Complete Drug Screen: Ethyl Alcohol, Benzodiazepine, Cocaine, Levamisole and Trazodone detected in blood, vitreous and urine. Specific drug assay for THC performed in blood, vitreous and urine. No other common acidic, neutral or basic drugs detected in blood, vitreous and urine.

Blood Ethyl Alcohol = 0.09 grams%

Vitreous Ethyl Alcohol = 0.13 grams%

Urine Ethyl Alcohol = 0.150 grams%

Cannabinoids (THC metabolite) by Immunoassay = Negative

	Blood	Vitreous	Urine
Alprazolam	0.012 mg/L	0.002 mg/L	0.02 mg/L
Cocaine	0.12 mg/L	0.04 mg/L	11 mg/L
Benzoylcegonine	1.46 mg/L	0.43 mg/L	56 mg/L
Ecgonine Methyl Ester	Present	Present	Present
Cocaethylene	Present	Present	Present
Levamisole	Present	Present	Present
Trazodone	0.58 mg/L	0.006 mg/L	0.33 mg/L

Note: Blood (Lavender Top) sent on (08/03/2020) for Nitrous Oxide testing; Report to Follow:

B.L. POSEY
S.N. KIMBLE
Directors

See attached ranges:

1580 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, California 93611
Phone (559) 323-9940
Fax (559) 323-7502

B. L. Posey

August 12, 2020

James Carlinus 13 August 2020



Case Name:

Despain, Sean

TOXICOLOGY NUMBER:

CVT-20-7056

Specimen Description:

Delivered by

Date

Received by

Date

Request:

Agency Case # 18938

Requesting Agency

Report To

S.L.O. Co. Sheriff's Office
Attn: Coroner's Division
835 Aerovista Pl., Ste. 130
San Luis Obispo CA 93401

RESULTS

Reference Ranges:

Blood Alprazolam Ranges
Effective Level: (0.005 - 0.1 mg/L)
Potentially Toxic: (0.1 - 0.4 mg/L)

Blood Trazodone Ranges
Effective Level: (0.5 - 2.5 mg/L)
Potentially Toxic: (4 mg/L)

Blood Cocaine Ranges
Effective Level: (0.05 - 0.3 mg/L)
Potentially Toxic: (0.25 - 5.0 mg/L)

Blood Benzoylcegonine Ranges
Effective Level: Non Active
Potentially Toxic: (1 - 10 mg/L)

B.L. POSEY
S.N. KIMBLE
Directors

1580 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, California 93611
Phone (559) 323-9940
Fax (559) 323-7502

Joseph C. ... 13 Aug 2020



NMS Labs

CONFIDENTIAL

200 Welsh Road, Horsham, PA 19044-2208
Phone: (215) 657-4900 Fax: (215) 657-2972
e-mail: nms@nmslabs.com

Robert A. Middleberg, PhD, F-ABFT, DABCC-TC, Laboratory Director

Toxicology Report

Report Issued 08/24/2020 20:03

Patient Name DESPAIN, SEAN
Patient ID CVT-20-7056
Chain 20238479
Age 40 Y DOB Not Given
Gender Male
Workorder 20238479

To: 60218
Central Valley Toxicology Inc.
Attn: Bill L. Posey
1580 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, CA 93611

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Positive Findings:

<u>Compound</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Matrix Source</u>
Nitrous Oxide	38	mcg/mL	001 - IVC (Inferior Vena Cava) Blood

See Detailed Findings section for additional information

Testing Requested:

<u>Analysis Code</u>	<u>Description</u>
3214B	Nitrous Oxide, Blood

Specimens Received:

<u>ID</u>	<u>Tube/Container</u>	<u>Volume/ Mass</u>	<u>Collection Date/Time</u>	<u>Matrix Source</u>	<u>Miscellaneous Information</u>
001	Lavender Vial	3 mL	07/23/2020 14:55	IVC (Inferior Vena Cava) Blood	

All sample volumes/weights are approximations.
Specimens received on 08/05/2020.

Joseph A. Middleberg 25 Aug 2020



Detailed Findings:

Analysis and Comments	Result	Units	Rpt. Limit	Specimen Source	Analysis By
Nitrous Oxide	38	mcg/mL	9.0	001 - IVC (Inferior Vena Cava) Blood	GC/MS

Other than the above findings, examination of the specimen(s) submitted did not reveal any positive findings of toxicological significance by procedures outlined in the accompanying Analysis Summary.

Reference Comments:

- Nitrous Oxide - IVC (Inferior Vena Cava) Blood:

Nitrous oxide is a colorless gas used therapeutically for its analgesic and anesthetic effects. It is not generally used as the sole agent for anesthetic purposes since toxicity (hypoxia) is observed at levels necessary for complete anesthesia. This substance is also abused for its euphoric effects.

During controlled anesthesia involving nitrous oxide, reported blood concentrations of nitrous oxide ranged from 310 - 400 mcg/mL. In deaths due to nitrous oxide, reported postmortem blood concentrations ranged from 83 - 320 mcg/mL. Reference values have been converted from mL/L to mcg/mL using a conversion factor of 1.8 mcg N2O/mL. The latter value is obtained by applying the ideal gas law at 25C.

Determined concentrations of nitrous oxide in analyzed fluids and tissues may be less than originally present due to the high vapor pressure of this compound.

Chain of custody documentation has been maintained for the analyses performed by NMS Labs.

Unless alternate arrangements are made by you, the remainder of the submitted specimens will be discarded six (6) weeks from the date of this report; and generated data will be discarded five (5) years from the date the analyses were performed.

Workorder 20238479 was electronically signed on 08/24/2020 19:40 by:

Donna M. Papsun, M.S., D-ABFT-FT
Forensic Toxicologist

Analysis Summary and Reporting Limits:

All of the following tests were performed for this case. For each test, the compounds listed were included in the scope. The Reporting Limit listed for each compound represents the lowest concentration of the compound that will be reported as being positive. If the compound is listed as None Detected, it is not present above the Reporting Limit. Please refer to the Positive Findings section of the report for those compounds that were identified as being present.

Acode 3214B - Nitrous Oxide, Blood - IVC (Inferior Vena Cava) Blood

-Analysis by Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS) for:

Compound	Rpt. Limit	Compound	Rpt. Limit
Nitrous Oxide	9.0 mcg/mL		