



Principal's Cause of Death Remains Unclear

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CHICAGO (CBS 2) — An autopsy was inconclusive for a Chicago elementary school principal who died while undergoing a root canal at an East Lakeview neighborhood dental office.

The Cook County Medical Examiner's office will need to conduct additional tests on the body of Georgette Watson, 46, of Skokie. She was pronounced dead at Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center Monday after going to cardiac arrest at the offices of Feldman & Feldman DDS, at 3423 N. Broadway.

Watson was principal of Brentano Math and Science Academy, at 2723 N. Fairfield Ave., in the Logan Square neighborhood. A well-liked educator who spent 25 years at Brentano as a teacher, then an assistant principal, and ultimately the person in charge, Watson passed away after a visit to the Feldman & Feldman dental practice, at 3423 N. Broadway. The two doctors are brothers.

Root canals are safe, common procedures. Police say Watson was under sedation, and that is uncommon.

"The other specialists rarely ever use sedation," said Dr. Christopher Wenckus of the UIC College of Dentistry. "We've been trained to use local anesthetics."

She stopped breathing about 40 minutes into the surgery. Police said personnel in the office tried to revive her before paramedics arrived. She suffered an apparent heart attack, authorities said. An autopsy preformed Tuesday was inconclusive.

No one answered the door at the Broadway office Tuesday morning, and a representative at another office declined to comment.

But the dentists, Laurence W. and Joseph David Feldman, did release a statement.

The statement read: "Words alone cannot measure the grief and sadness we feel on the sudden loss of Georgette Watson. We, too, are overcome with emotion while recalling past visits where we experienced her wonderful ways and charm. We know how much her family, as well as the Brentano School family, meant to her, and her to them. We hope that they can embrace her loving ways, as we will, as they struggle to face the loss of someone who occupied such a big place in their hearts and lives."

The statement did not address the circumstances of Watson's death.

The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation put the doctors on probation last July for performing crown and bridge treatment on a patient allegedly below the standard of care and failing to maintain proper patient records. The probation is in effect until Sept. 30, 2009.

Both dentists have been disciplined for unspecified reasons in the past, the department said. State officials said the brothers have been complying with the terms of their probation. They also said during a random inspection of one of their offices recently, no problems were found.