

**35/02 - "Near-Death Experiences During Induced Cardiac Arrest" - only abstract available**

**Instituição/Institution:** Division of Personality Studies, University of Virginia - USA

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**Abstract:**

**Objectives:** "Near-death experiences" (NDEs) reported by some persons near death often include a sense of being out of the body and seeing from a perspective outside the body. Out-of-body perceptions, if accurate, may provide information about mind/brain relationships. Study of out-of-body perceptions during NDEs has been hindered by the unpredictable occurrence of NDEs and the lack of control of conditions of the NDE.

In cardiac electrophysiology clinics, patients with serious cardiac illness may have automatic implantable cardioverters/defibrillators (ICDs) surgically implanted in their chests. ICDs are electrical devices that monitor heartbeat, automatically detect cardiac arrest, and administer electrical shock to return the heart to normal rhythm. When ICDs are implanted in a person's chest, cardiac arrest must be induced under monitored conditions to test the ICD, allowing the opportunity for NDEs under controlled circumstances.

This study was designed to investigate the accuracy of out-of-body perceptions during induced cardiac arrests.

**Methods:** A computer in the operating room displayed randomly-selected targets visible only from a perspective looking down on the body of the patient from above eye level. In interviews with patients after implantation of the ICD, we determined the incidence of NDEs and sought evidence of accurate observations from an out-of-body perspective. We also hoped to assess the influence of NDEs on later psychological and physiological outcome at 9-month follow-up.

**Results:** In 52 induced cardiac arrests, no patient reported an NDE, leaving the body, or seeing from an out-of-body perspective. It was thus not possible to test the accuracy of their out-of-body perceptions or the effect of NDEs on psychological and physiological outcome.

**Conclusions:** Although this failure to find any NDE in induced cardiac arrests was surprising, I suggest three explanations: reassurance to the patients that they would not be in danger of dying; brief duration of induced cardiac arrest; and sedative medication that interfered with memory of NDEs.

**Publications:** Greyson, B., Holden, J. M., Mounsey, J. P. (2006). Failure to elicit near-death experiences in induced cardiac arrest. *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 25, 85-98.

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