Family attorneys: Independent autopsy finds George Floyd died from asphyxia due to sustained forceful pressure



Photo: Courtesy of Attorney Benjamin Crump. George Floyd

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An independent autopsy conducted by doctors hired by the George Floyd family's legal team found he died from asphyxia due to sustained forceful pressure.

Attorney Ben Crump and co-counsel Antonio Romanucci, who are representing the family of George Floyd, announced the findings of the independent autopsy Monday afternoon.

Dr. Michael Baden and Dr. Allecia Wilson were hired by the Floyd family's legal team to conduct the independent autopsy. They say the sustained pressure on George Floyd's neck impeded blood flow to the brain while the weight on his back impeded his ability to breathe. They ruled the manner of death as homicide.

George Floyd family's legal team hires independent medical examiner to conduct autopsy (https://kstp.com/news/george-floyd-family-legal-team-hires-independent-medical-examiner-to-conductautopsy/5745577/)

The attorneys previously said the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office didn't address the "effect of the purposeful use of force on Mr. Floyd's neck."

"We are not surprised, yet we are tragically disappointed in the preliminary autopsy findings released today by the medical examiner," Crump said Saturday after preliminary autopsy results were released. "We hope that this does not reflect efforts to create a false narrative for the reason George Floyd died. Attempts to avoid the hard truth will not stand and on behalf of the family, we are fiercely committed to bringing the truth to light."

With the independent results, the legal team and Floyd's family called for the arrests of the other three Minneapolis police officers who were fired in connection to Floyd's death. Former officer Derek Chauvin is charged with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter in Floyd's death and was the arresting officer who was seen kneeling on Floyd's neck in video.

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The Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office said preliminary results "revealed no physical findings that support a diagnosis of traumatic asphyxia or strangulation," and said Floyd had underlying health conditions of coronary artery disease and hypertensive heart disease. The preliminary report added, "The combined effects of Mr. Floyd being restrained by the police, his underlying health conditions and any potential intoxicants in his system likely contributed to his death."

There were no other details about intoxicants, and toxicology results can take weeks. Final autopsy results from the medical examiner's office are still pending.

Romanucci said that while it was Chauvin's knee that pressed into Floyd's neck, the culture of Minneapolis Police was responsible for Floyd's death.

Mugshot of Derek Chauvin released, charging document details night of George Floyd's fatal arrest (https://kstp.com/news/hennepin-county-attorney-mike-freeman-updates-george-floyd-case-following-former-minneapolis-police-officer-chauvin-arrest/5744900/)

"The City of Minneapolis clearly had a pattern, custom and practice of failing to train and discipline its police officers, creating a culture of impunity allowing them to treat people of color as lesser human beings, unworthy of basic respect," Romanucci said.

While the family and legal team also called for people to continue using their voices to protest, they asked for people to refrain from violence and looting.

"On behalf of the family that we understand the righteous anger we see playing out on streets across the country. We support the activism and energy of the people who want to make sure we achieve change, and we hope those efforts continue," Crump said. "But looting and violence are absolutely unacceptable. They were unacceptable to George, and they must be unacceptable to us. The way to honor George is to achieve justice. As a country, we need to take a deep breath. George Floyd wasn't allowed that, but we must. We have a team of top legal minds who are not going to stop until there's justice for George Floyd and his family."

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