

SOCIETY OF FORENSIC TOXICOLOGISTS, INC.

Promotes

- Information Exchange
- Discussion Forums
- Cooperation
- Education
- Research
- Publication
- Training
- Certification
- Accreditation

What is Forensic Toxicology?

Toxicology is the study of the adverse effects of drugs and chemicals on biological systems. *Forensic toxicology* deals with the application of toxicology to cases and issues where those adverse effects have administrative or medicolegal consequences, and where the results are likely to be used in court. Forensic toxicology is a modern science, based on published and widely accepted scientific methods and practices, for both analysis of drugs in biological materials, and interpretation of those results.

**For additional information,
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SOCIETY
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INTRODUCTION TO S.O.F.T.

The Society of Forensic Toxicologists, Inc. is a not-for-profit professional organization composed of practicing forensic toxicologists and those interested in the discipline for the purpose of promoting and developing forensic toxicology. Through its annual meetings, the Society provides a forum for the exchange of information and ideas among toxicology professionals in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere.

S.O.F.T. sponsored programs such as workshops, newsletters, and S.O.F.T. sponsored technical publications constantly improve the forensic toxicologists' skills and knowledge. The Society fosters friendship and cooperation among toxicologists and advocates a high level of professionalism through certification and accreditation programs.

HISTORY OF S.O.F.T.

In 1970, a group of forensic toxicologists in the Nassau County Medical Examiner's Office, headed by the late Abe Freireich, felt there was a need for an informal gathering of toxicologists between the annual meetings of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. The first meeting was held in October 1970, in Long Island, New York and was referred to as the "Interim Toxicology Meeting". It was an auspicious occasion. Several prominent forensic toxicologists attended that first meeting and one entire afternoon was spent discussing "Head Space Analysis of Volatiles". So much benefit and useful information was derived from this meeting that it was agreed by the attendees that this type of meeting should occur on an annual basis each Fall to discuss whatever topics were pertinent at that particular time. Informal meetings continued for two more years and then a turning point occurred at the Philadelphia meeting in 1973. At this meeting much discussion was generated about the formal organization of this unstructured group of toxicologists. The attendees believed that an organized group could do more to promote the cause of forensic toxicology, advance education and ensure knowledgeable input into standards governing the profession. In 1974, the newly elected president, Dr.

Jane Speaker, conducted the first formal meeting of S.O.F.T. in Chapel Hill, N.C. Since that time, S.O.F.T. has established a charter, published a newsletter, funded and awarded Education Research Awards to deserving students, given many workshops for the continuing education of its members and established a web-site. The organization became officially incorporated in 1983.

Although the Society is now officially organized, S.O.F.T. hopes to retain the flavor and atmosphere of that first informal gathering of toxicologists in Long Island for the express purpose of promoting understanding and goodwill among those of our chosen profession.

S.O.F.T. SPONSORED PROGRAMS

1. Awards including:
 - A. Forensic Toxicology Education Research Award offered annually to graduate or post-graduate students pursuing studies in forensic toxicology.
 - B. Young Scientist Meeting Award offered annually to a young forensic toxicologist who conducts an original research project and provides new information to the field of toxicology.
 - C. The Leo Dal Cortivo annual meeting awards for a young forensic toxicologist who presents the best oral or poster presentation at the annual S.O.F.T. meeting.
2. ToxTalk™: A newsletter that includes general and technical information pertinent to the SOFT membership.
3. A web-site, www.soft-tox.org, providing organizational information, resources, annual meeting information, and an employment exchange.
4. Journal of Analytical Toxicology, a peer-reviewed publication devoted to the timely dissemination of scientific communication regarding forensic toxicology.
5. Young Forensic Toxicologists: A program devoted to the promotion of education, networking and interaction among young forensic toxicology practitioners.
6. Elmer Gordon Open Forum: An open forum at the annual meeting which provides an opportunity for the discussion of relevant problems and experiences in forensic toxicology.
7. Scientific Resources regarding drugged driving, drug-facilitated sexual assault, and designer drugs.

MEMBERSHIP IN S.O.F.T.

Membership in S.O.F.T. is available to all qualified individuals actively engaged in forensic toxicology at the time of application. Specific requirements of membership and application forms are available on the S.O.F.T. website (www.soft-tox.org).

PURPOSES AND GOALS OF S.O.F.T.

1. Provide an organization of professional forensic toxicologists.
2. Promote the establishment and acceptance of uniform qualifications and requirements for the certification of forensic toxicologists by an independent body, and to support the mechanism for their certification.
3. Stimulate research and development in the field of forensic toxicology.
4. Support the activities of the Scientific Working Group for Forensic Toxicology (SWGTOX) which includes the development and dissemination of consensus standards for the practice of forensic toxicology.
5. Provide a forum for the discussion and exchange of professional experiences between members and among others engaged in the administration of justice, governmental functions, and allied fields.
6. Promote continuing education and training in forensic toxicology.
7. When appropriate and upon request, review and make recommendations on pending or existing legislation that appears to relate to the field of forensic toxicology.
8. Consider and act upon problems affecting forensic toxicology as a profession, and promote the welfare of forensic toxicologists.

S.O.F.T. is a member of the Forensic Toxicology Council (FTC) and Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO).