

NUR430
Part 11
Forensics in Nursing



Forensics: Pertaining to the Law

Forensic Nursing: Application of
Nursing to the Law





What is Forensic Nursing?

- The application of forensic science, combined with clinical nursing practice as they are applied to public or legal proceedings in the law enforcement arena.
- It is the application of forensic aspects of health care combined with biopsychosocial education of the registered nurse in the scientific investigation and treatment of trauma, death, violent or criminal activity, and traumatic accidents within the clinical or community institution (Lynch, 1991).

SANE/FNE/SART





Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)

- A *registered nurse* who has been specially trained to provide *comprehensive care* to sexual assault patients, who demonstrates competency in conducting a *forensic exam* and the *ability to be an expert witness*.



Benefits of a SANE TEAM

- Willingness
- Specialty training
- Comprehensive care
- Fact based documentation (drop all opinions)
- Forensic issue
 - evidence collection
 - chain of custody
 - courtroom testimony



SART

- Provide victim centered services
- Provide compassionate care
- Provide community awareness
 - Where to come
 - How we will treat you
- Encourage reporting of Sexual Assaults
- Encourage successful apprehension and prosecution of guilty offenders
- Aid in the identifying of false reporting





Nurse Coroners/ Forensic Nurse Death Investigators





Nurse Coroner/Death Investigation

- A licensed nurse who carries out the duties of a death investigator in accordance with the performance standards and procedures established under the medical examiner or coroner's system of death investigating and the jurisdictional standards of practice.



Nurse Coroner/Death Investigation

- Nurses have the educational background to understand exactly what causes death and what happens to a body after death occurs. Death may be a criminal event, but it is always a medical event.
- If it is determined that the death was due to criminal cause then it is law enforcement's job to determine who. Who better to determine the manner of death than medical personnel?



Nurse Coroner/Death Investigation

- Manner of death is the circumstances in which the cause of death arose, i.e. natural, accident, homicide, suicide, and undetermined.
- In some cases manner of death may be difficult to determine and may appear accidental (i.e. in a suicide without a note).
- Forensic nurses possess the skills necessary to complete a psychological autopsy and interpret the subtle nuances of medications, health history and circumstances surrounding suspicious deaths.



Nurse Coroner/Death Investigation

- Mechanism of death is the physiologic derangement or biochemical disturbance incompatible with life, which is initiated by the cause of death, e.g. cardiac arrest.
- Forensic nurses are well educated in physiology and are therefore prepared to accurately distinguish between the cause and the physiologic mechanism of death.



Nurse Attorneys / Legal Nurse Consultants: Goals

- To establish a leadership role in health care policy making.
- To influence health care social policy, health care legislation and nursing practice acts.
- To educate the public about health law issues.
- To educate the public about nurse attorneys.
- To educate nurses about the legal system.
- To represent the public; client advocate.



Nurse Attorneys/Legal Nurse Consultants

- Nurses want to make fundamental change in the way healthcare is delivered, and recognizing that it needs to occur through legislation and political process is a big piece of it.
- Like nurses, attorneys must interact with people who are vulnerable, who have been injured or traumatized, and who need assistance to regain their wholeness.
- Client advocacy is the skill nurses bring to the profession.



Psychiatric and Mental Health: Issues and Goals

- The enhancement of appropriate care for the severe and persistently mentally ill.
- The integration of psychiatric and addictions treatment.
- Strategies for promotion of mental health and prevention of psychiatric disorders.
- The provision of appropriate care within the criminal justice system.
- The equitable provision of care for children and adolescents.



Psychiatric and Mental Health: Issues and Goals

- Ensuring access to care for older adults and members of minority groups.
- Advocacy for access to psychiatric-mental health services as readily as access to medical services.
- The development of an evidence-based approach to teaching nursing students about psychiatric-mental health nursing, at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels of education.



Correctional Health Nurses

- Correctional healthcare is a unique specialty area.
- Goals:
 - Facilitate an improved working relationship between the private sector and the correctional staff in jails, adult and juvenile detention centers, prisons to meet the needs of the inmate patient.
 - Promote correctional healthcare as part of the public health continuum.



Domestic Violence

- DV is the leading cause of injury to women in the world.
- DV is the leading nonobstetric cause of death to pregnant women.
- Every 9 seconds a women is battered.
- 1:3 women are a victim of domestic violence



Eva's Top 5 Domestic Violence Myths/Facts

■ MYTHS

- Poor/unemployed
- The victim spends a lot of time running to the doctor
- He would never hurt the children
- He only does this when he drinks
- He wouldn't kill her

■ FACTS

- <15% unemployed
- Only 2/3 will seek medical assistance
- There is an increased incidence of child abuse
- 67% report alcohol abuse only 1/5 drinking at the time of abuse
- 2 women die each week at the hands of their husbands/Texas



63% of Young Men Ages
11 to 20 Who Are
Serving Time for
Homicide Have Killed
Their Mothers' Abusers





More Facts..

- DV kills as many women every 5 years as the total number of Americans killed in the Vietnam War...54,000
- Approximately 50% of all homeless women and children in the U.S. are fleeing DV.
- There are 7 animal shelters for every 1 DV shelter.



DV & Healthcare Costs

- 3-5 billion dollars in health care claims
- 100 million dollars in absenteeism, high turnover and lost productivity
- Employee's miss 1,175,000 days of work per year because of DV alone
- DV in the US costs an estimated \$67 billion/year
- 13,000 acts of DV against women occur in the workplace every year
- Up to 52% of victims of DV have lost their jobs because batterers typically engage in behavior that makes it difficult to work



Types of Abuse

- Physical
 - Hitting, kicking, strangulation, weapons
- Emotional/psychological
 - Threats, destruction of self worth, isolation
- Financial
 - Work, advancement, access to finances, credit,

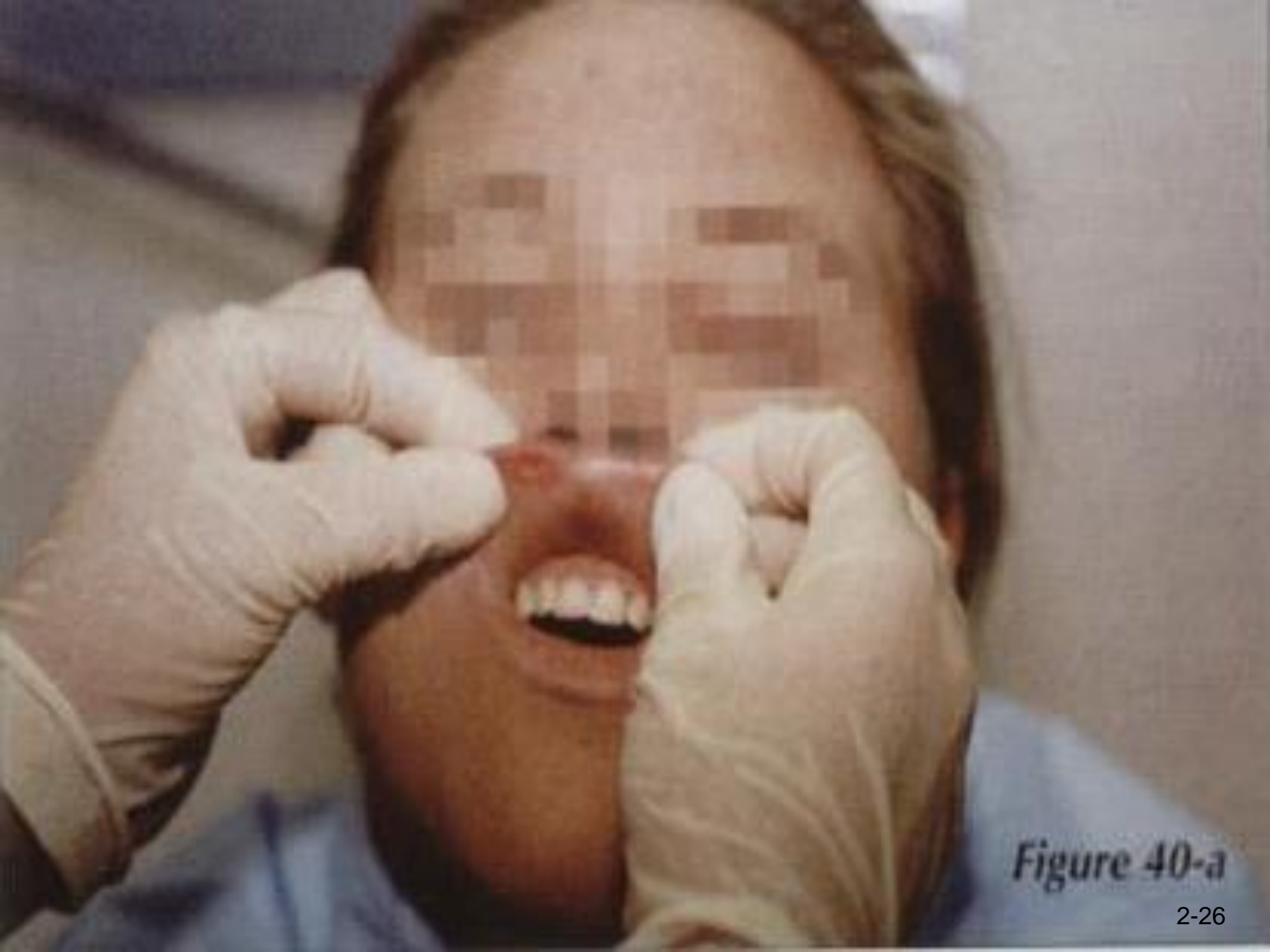


Figure 40-a

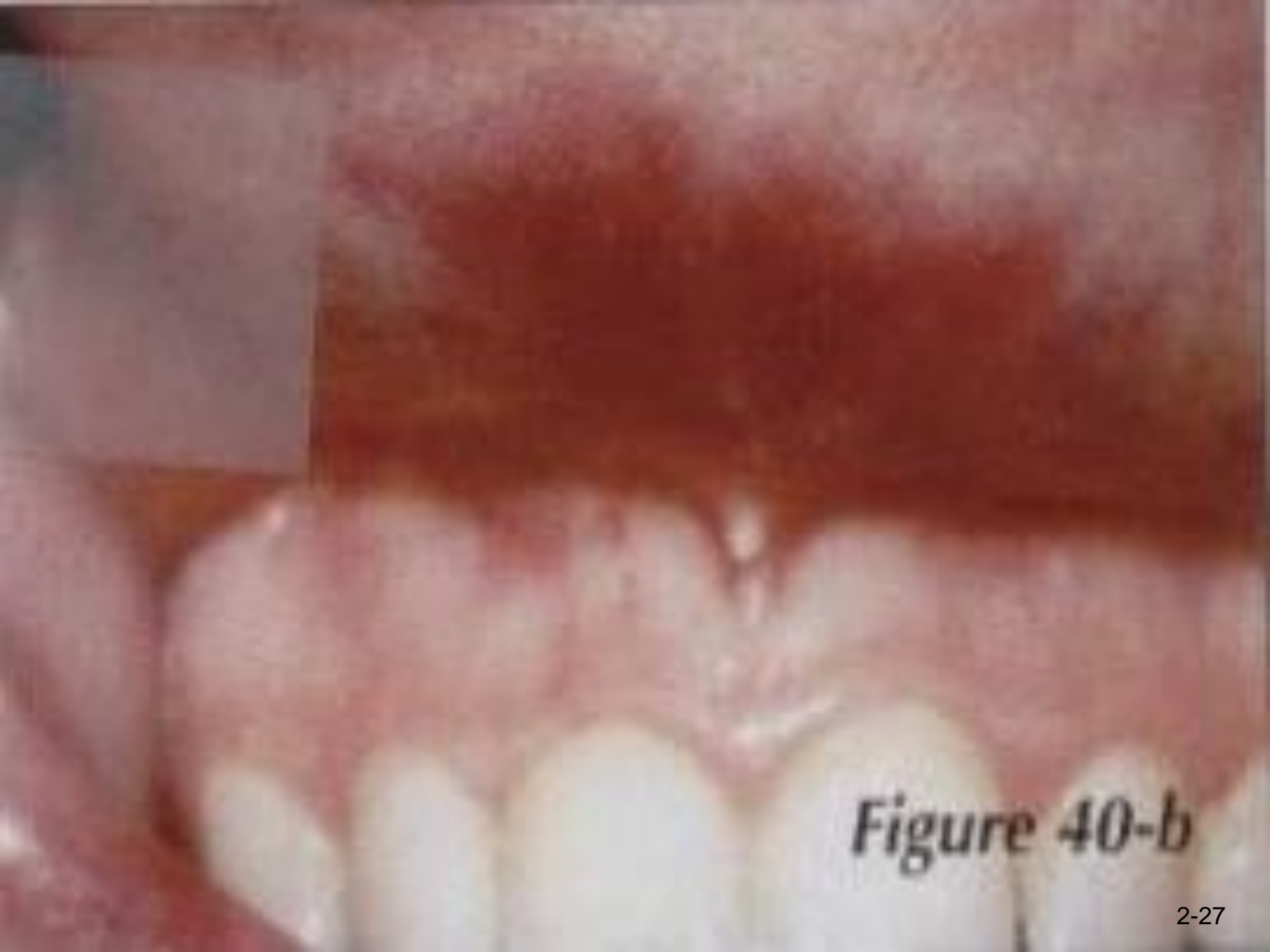
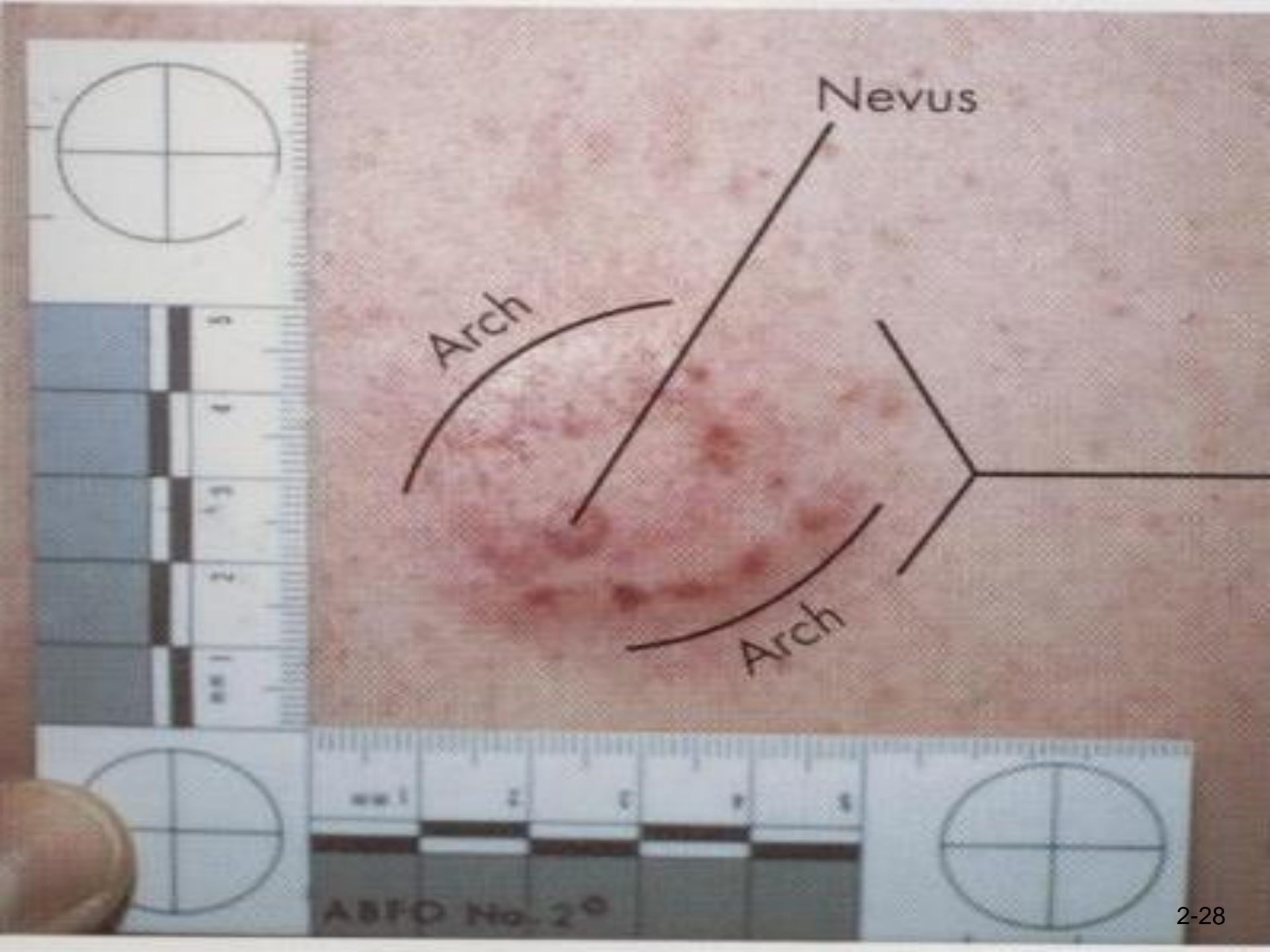


Figure 40-b



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