

DETECTION OF BLOODSTAINS ON COTTON FABRIC AFTER WASHING

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After a criminal act a perpetrator may try to wash the bloodstains, either by hand wash in cold water or using a regular washing machine. The washing procedure can alter original bloodstains on fabric. The current experiment was focused on determining an effect of blood drying time and various washing conditions (water temperature, detergent use, machine, and hand wash simulated washing) on presentation of bloodstains on washed cotton fabric. The result of this experiment suggests that regular hand wash procedure in cold water (30°C), regardless of drying time lapsed from the deposition of blood on fabric until washing, would not be sufficient to completely remove or destroy original contour of the bloodstain on cotton fabric. All tested samples washed at 60 and 95°C suggest that a machine washing procedure with the usage of detergent should be sufficient for removing visible bloodstains from cotton fabric, but not for latent bloodstains. As an advice for prosecutors, even in case of no obvious bloodstains, bloodstain pattern analysts should always examine clothing of the suspects in all criminal cases connected with bloodshed event.

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