

# Introduction to Medical-Legal Ethics

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### 1. Introduction

- Medical-legal ethics combines moral principles with legal rules governing healthcare.
- It guides professionals in making decisions that are both ethical and lawful.

### 2. Core Ethical Principles

- **Autonomy:** respecting a patient's right to make their own decisions.
- **Beneficence:** acting in the patient's best interest.
- **Non-maleficence:** avoiding harm.
- **Justice:** treating patients fairly and equitably.

### 3. The Legal Dimension

- Laws set enforceable standards for consent, confidentiality, and negligence.
- Ethics often goes beyond the law, addressing what is right even when not legally required.

### 4. Relationship Between Ethics and Law

- Most ethical duties are supported by law, but the two can conflict.
- Professionals must balance legal obligations with moral judgement.

### 5. Why It Matters

- Protects patient rights and maintains public trust in healthcare.
- Guides difficult decisions in complex clinical situations.

### 6. Summary

- Medical-legal ethics blends moral principles and legal duties.
- It provides a framework for safe, fair, and respectful care.