

COMLEX Level 2 PE Exam

A 40 years old lady came to clinic with a bruise on her wrist and a dark spot under her right eye that just wouldn't go away.



Patient Data Sheet

- **Patient Name:** Ms. Brown
- **Clinical Settings:** Medicine Office
- **CC:** 40 years old female presents with a bruise on her wrist and a dark spot under her right eye that just wouldn't go away.

Vital Signs:

- **Blood Pressure** : 130 / 88 mm Hg
- **Respirations** : 16 per minute
- **Temperature** : 99.2 °F
- **Pulse** : 90 bpm, regular
- **Height** : 66 inches
- **Weight** : 137 lbs.
- **BMI** : 22.1 kg/m²

Differential diagnoses

- Domestic abuse.
- Substance abuse e.g. Medication overdose, illicit drug use, Alcoholism (leading to falls and accidents).
- Factitious disorder.
- Bleeding disorders.

Opening scenario

- An African American woman seated in the office, looks very anxious and high strung. She is searching for stuff in her bag. Looks very distraught.
- Makes poor eye contact and looks avoidant when asked about her bruises.

Key points to remember

- Patient may be extremely sensitive in case of domestic abuse.
- The diagnosis is always by high amount of clinical suspicion, confirmed by circumstantial evidences like inconsistent history, injuries at unusual places, injuries inconsistent with the history, X-ray wrist, CT head etc.
- Be very professional and non judgmental in approach.
- Offer support and guidance.

Contd...

Key points to remember (Contd...)

- Always ask if patient feels safe at home and/or work.
- Ask about possibility of sexual abuse.
- Ask if there are firearms at home.
- Ask if the kids feel safe at home and if she would want help.
- Ask if the pattern of abuse is repetitive (in most cases it is).

Key points to remember (Contd...)

- Ask if she has a plan to escape and a safe location to go to and take kids with her, if need be.
- Ask if she is socially and financially stable and has support systems outside of the marriage / relationship with the abuser.

Subjective

- **Hello Ms. Brown. My name is Dr. O'Keefe. I am a physician in this hospital and I will take care of you today. What brings you to our office today ?**
- *Hi doc. Just these couple of bruises, nothing major (pt avoids eye contact, looks fidgety, tries to do something else while talking).*
- **I see. Would you like to tell me more about them ?**

Contd...

Subjective (Contd...)

- *Well doc, there's this bruise on my wrist and it kinda hurts. I couldn't do a whole lot of work. And there's this dark spot under my eye. It wont go away, it looks bad and no make up can cover it. I just wanted you to check them out and give me something to fix these. Other than that I am good.*
- **I see. I would like to ask you more questions about them before I treat you. Is that ok ?**
- *Sure doc. Is it going to take long? I have to go home and make lunch for my kids.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Well, I will be done with the questions and examining you in 15 mins. Within half an hour you should be done.**
- *Okay.*
- **So how long have these bruises been there ?**
- *The one on my wrist is just 2 days old. The dark spot under my eye is a month old.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **I see. Have you noticed any other bruises or dark spots in any other part of your body ?**
- *No its just these two.*
- **I see. Did you accidentally trip over something or bumped yourself against something recently?**
- *Yeah well I was up the other night to drink some water. I hit my hand against the kitchen counter. I guess that explains it.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **I see. Has the bruise been the same size since or has it grown ?**
- *It's the same doc.*
- **Do you bleed easily from your nose or gums ?**
- *No doc. Why are you asking these questions ? Can I just get something and go ?*
- **Well, I understand you are in a hurry. But I have to ask you questions to be sure what the problem is. Without knowing what it is, it would be difficult to help you.**

Subjective (Contd...)

- *Okay.*
- **I am going to ask you a few questions about your family life and living conditions now. This information will be totally confidential and you can feel safe in sharing it with me. It will be used only for medical purposes and to help you.**
- *Okay.*
- **Who do you live with ?**
- *With my husband and 2 kids.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Okay. How long have you been married ?**
- *18 years now doc.*
- **I see. How old are your kids ?**
- *My daughter is a high school junior and son is in middle school.*
- **Good. Do they do well at school ?**
- *Yes they are both okay.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Do you work Ms. Brown ?**
- *No I am a stay at home mom. I dropped out of high school.*
- **I see. What work does your husband do ?**
- *He works as a handy-man.*
- **How's your social situation ? Are you happy with what you have ?**
- *Yeah well, we have to make do in these times. But I would say we do okay.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Have you ever had any trouble like this before ?**
- *No, I have been healthy.*
- **Do you feel safe at home ?**
- *Patient starts weeping here.*
- **Reassure her, put your hand on her shoulder, offer tissues and a glass of water. Let her calm down and then resume.**
- **Its okay, you can feel safe confiding into me. I wont share your info with anyone else.**

Subjective (Contd...)

- *Doc, I don't feel good.*
- **What seems to be the problem Ms. Brown ?**
- *He hits me.*
- **I am sorry to hear that Ms. Brown. How long has this been going on ?**
- *Well since the time my daughter was 5.*
- **That is a long time. Is there anything that makes him do that ?**
- *Not really doc, he gets drunk and screams at me and hits me.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **I am very sorry to hear that Ms. Brown. I can understand it must be difficult for you. Do you feel your kids are safe ?**
- *Yes he doesn't touch them. But I don't want them to grow up seeing all this. They already have seen a lot, I don't want them to see more of this.*
- **I understand your concern. Does he also demand sex when you don't want it ?**
- *All the time doc, since I was pregnant with my son.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **I am sorry, Ms. Brown. Its not easy to go through all this. Does he have any firearms ?**
- *No doc.*
- **Does he use any drugs ?**
- *Yes doc, he used to do cocaine and stuff. He was in rehab for 3 months last year. Then he told me he's been clean. But I doubt it. He has buddies at work who do all that. I m sure he does it with them sometimes.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **I understand, it is very likely he might. Has he been hitting you bad lately ?**
- *Well no doc, its been the same as the past. But now I cant take it anymore. I am growing older, I have broken a bone in my nose once, never went to a doc. It healed on its own. This time I think it might be worse. I cant see very clear with my right eye doc.*
- **I see. Did he hit you on the head or near your eye recently?**
- *Yes doc, we had this fight the other day and he just pushed me away. I went and fell on the stair case and bruised myself badly.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Oh I am so sorry to hear all that Ms. Brown. You did the right thing by coming in. You need medical help. You also need help with your social situation.**
- *Thank you doc, I am so scared.*
- **Yes I can see that. Ms. Brown, as your physician, I want you to know that you don't have to take this abuse from your husband. There is help available. You don't have to live in an unsafe situation or let your kids be in the place.**
- *Thank you doc, that sounds so good.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Ms. Brown, can I ask you few more questions about your safety ?**
- *Yes doc.*
- **Do you have a plan to go away from home or a place to stay if you had to leave ?**
- *Yes doc, one of my sisters is willing to take me in. She knows this situation.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Okay good. Do you have other family and friends who would be willing to support and help you ?**
- *Yes doc, two of my friends and my eldest sister are with me. In fact my sister was visiting yesterday and she saw this bruise, I cant even lift a glass of water on my own. She said I must go to the hospital and get treatment. Doc I don't even have insurance.*
- **Your sister is right, you do need medical treatment. And I appreciate your coming in, you did the right thing. Don't worry about insurance right now, your health and safety are more important. We can work those things out later with our social worker here.**
- *Thank you doctor.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Ms. Brown, I want you to know that there is a domestic abuse prevention help in the state. Would you like me to talk to them on your behalf ?**
- *Yes doc, I would appreciate that.*
- **Okay I will report to them about you. You don't have to be afraid of anything. They will handle the case very sensibly. They have been involved in this work for many years. If you feel unsafe going back home, we can have you picked up by them. If you wish, your kids can also be moved to a safer environment.**
- *Thank you doc, I would like that.*

Subjective (Contd...)

- **Okay. I will get in touch with them and make the necessary arrangements.**

Pam Hugs Foss

- **Okay Ms. Brown, now let me just go over your medical problems and other history, then I will briefly examine you. Then we will work on getting in touch with the Domestic abuse prevention people.**
- *Sure doc.*
- **Do you have any medical problems ?**
- *Just asthma, doc. I take the inhaler, as needed.*

Pam Hugs Foss (Contd...)

- **Okay. Do you take any other medications, including over the counter and herbal medicines?**
- *No doc.*
- **Are you allergic to any medication or substance?**
- *No.*
- **Have you been hospitalized in past ?**
- *No.*

Pam Hugs Foss (Contd...)

- **Have you had any surgery in past ?**
- *No.*
- **Do you have any trouble with moving your bowels or urination ?**
- *No doc.*
- **Any troubles sleeping?**
- *No.*

Pam Hugs Foss (Contd...)

- **Do you have any history of medical problems in your family ?**
- *None that I know of.*
- **Okay. Now I will ask you about your habits.**
- **Do you smoke ?**
- *No I don't smoke, never smoked.*
- **Do you drink alcohol ?**
- *No doc. I keep away from all this. My kids see enough from my husband, I don't want to mess up.*

Contd...

Pam Hugs Foss (Contd...)

- **Have you ever used recreational drugs ?**
- *No doc, I am a god fearing person.*
- **Okay good. Thank you Ms. Brown for all the information. I will now wash my hands and examine you. Then we will discuss the further plan.**
- *Sure doc. I feel better already.*
- **Good to know that. You'll be fine. We'll take care of things.**

Physical Examination

- Wash your hands.
- Drape the patient.
- Examine all systems.
- Look for unusual sites of bruises, any possible anatomic defects / clinical signs of fracture, tenderness.
- Do not repeat painful maneuvers.
- In case of apparent injury at or around joints, check for range of motion.
- Explains, offers and performs OMM if indicated.

Closure: Assessment and Plan discussion

- **Thank you for your cooperation Ms. Brown. I would like to run a few basic labs now. Then I will have you sent for an X-ray of your hand and a C.T. scan of your head. I want to be sure you didn't bleed inside your head. I also want to see the size of injury in your wrist and eye.**
- **Please tell me at this time, if you have been hurt anywhere else or feel tender. We can image that part as well.**
- *No doc, its just these 2 places right now.*

Contd...

Closure: Assessment and Plan discussion (Contd...)

- **Okay Ms. Brown. As you go thru these tests, I will get in touch with the domestic abuse prevention. We also have a social worker here in the hospital, she can also help you with your social and financial situation.**
- **Ms. Brown, I also want you to know that we have good counselors here. If you feel like talking to someone about your emotional and family problems, I can help take care of that too.**

Closure: Assessment and Plan discussion (Contd...)

- *I will think about it doc.*
- **No problem. If you wish to talk to them, just let me know.**
- *Sure doc. Thanks, you are such a help.*
- **You are welcome. I would like you to be admitted as well while we contact social worker, Domestic Abuse counselor and shelter services. Is there any other question or concern you would like to talk about now?**
- *No doc.*
- **Okay Ms. Brown, I will see you again when you are done with the tests. You take care.**
- *Thank you doctor.*


Assessment and Plan

➤ **Assessment:**

- 1.Domestic abuse
- 2.Substance abuse

➤ **Plan:**

- 1.Ibuprofen 400 mg PO three times a day prn for pain
- 2.CBC with differential, CMP, X-ray Rt. wrist – 3 views-AP, Lateral and oblique, CT Head, non-contrast, Urine toxicology
- 3.Consult social worker and Domestic Abuse counselor
- 4.Admit to hospital
- 5.Contact shelter services



**Someone you know
needs help.**

SHE DESERVES HER DIGNITY



Happy Reading