

A Differential Diagnosis Mnemonics Handbook - and the Parts of the Medical History

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Mnemonics are memory tools to help in the memorization of long lists. These differential diagnosis and medical history mnemonics are intended to aid memorization. These mnemonics are not all inclusive and should be used in conjunction with standard textbooks of medical diagnosis and differential diagnosis. The electronic text in PDF or word has hyperlinks to navigate.

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Parts of the Medical History

Chiefly History in the Past tells your Family Social Review
CC - Chief Complaint - quote patient x duration
HPI – [History of the Present Illness with “LOCATES”](#)
PMH – [Past Medical History with “A History”](#)
FH – [Family History with Genetics and household contact](#)
SH – [Social History with the “Flames”](#)
ROS – [Review of Systems](#)

Emotions and Difficult Interviews

Anger – [“Anger”](#)
Fear/Anxiety – [“Afraid”](#)
Depressed – [“Flat line and Grasp”](#)
Demanding/Dependant – [“Reflects”](#)
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Quiet – [“Open”](#)
Setting the Stage – [“Knocks Privately”](#)
Facilitating the Interview – [“I can keep interest going”](#)
Giving Bad news – [“Stop and Pray”](#)

* ACUTE ABDOMINAL PAIN: "BAD GUT PAIN" and "ECTOPIC"

B - Bowel obstruction
A - Appendicitis, Adenitis (mesenteric)
D - Diverticulitis
 Diabetic Ketoacidosis
 Dysentery/Diarrhea Drug withdrawal
G - Gastroenteritis
 Gall bladder disease/stones/
 obstruction/infection
U - Urinary tract obstruction (stone)
 infection (pyelo/cystitis)
T - Testicular Torsion
 Toxin - Lead, black widow spider bite
P - Pneumonia/Pleurisy
 Pancreatitis
 Perforated bowel/ulcer
 Porphyria
A - Abdominal aneurysm
IN - Infarcted bowel
 Infarcted myocardium (AMI)
 Incarcerated hernia
 Inflammatory bowel disease
S - Splenic rupture/infarction
 Sickle cell pain crisis
 sequestration crisis

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* For FEMALES with acute PELVIC pain, think "ECTOPIC" as well as the above causes

E - Ectopic (This is your priority rule out always)

Endometriosis

C - Cyst rupture (corpus luteum cyst rupture)

T - Torsion of ovary or cyst

O - Ovulation: Mittelschmerz

P - Pelvic Inflammatory Disease,
salpingitis, tubo - ovarian abscess

I - Incomplete abortion

C - Cystitis/pyelonephritis [Index](#)

* AMYLASE INCREASED : "PAROTID"

P - Pancreatitis acute and chronic

Pancreatic pseudocyst

Parotitis (mumps, alcohol, any
parotid inflammation)

Pregnancy

Perforated bowel

A - Abdominal trauma, Acute burns

R - Ruptured ectopic pregnancy
Renal failure

O - Obstructed intestines

T - Tumor of pancreas, lung, ovary, esophagus

I - Infarcted bowel

D - Diabetic ketoacidosis
Drug - Morphine/Demerol [Index](#)

* ANEMIA: MACROCYTIC = "BIG FAT RED CELLS"

B-B12 Malabsorption

I-Inherited

G-Gastrointestinal disease or surgery

F-Folic Acid Deficiency

A-Alcoholism

T-Thiamin responsive

R-Reticulocytes miscounted as large RBCs

E- Endocrine - hypothyroid

D-Dietary

C-Chemotherapeutic Drugs

E-Erythro Leukemia

L- Liver Disease

L- Lesch-Nyhan Syndrome

S-Splenectomy [Index](#)

*ANEMIA: NORMOCYTIC = "NORMAL SIZE"

N - Normal Pregnancy

O - Over hydration

R - Renal Disease

M - Myelophthistic

A - Acute Blood loss

L - Liver Disease

SI - Systemic Infection or Inflammation
Z - Zero production - Aplastic
E - Endocrine: Hypothyroid, hypoadrenal,
decreased androgen [Index](#)

ANEMIA: MICROCYTIC = "TICS"

T - Thalassemias
I - Iron Deficiency: Source: GI Bleed 56%
Menses 29%
Diet 19%
C - Chronic Inflammation
S - Sideroblastic -lead toxicity [Index](#)

ANEMIA: HEMOLYTIC : "HEMATOLOGIST".

H - Hemoglobinopathy: Hb SS, SC, S beta Thal
Hemoglobinuria: Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria.
E - Enzyme Deficiency- Inherited Pyruvate Kinase (PK) deficiency and pyrimidine-5'-nucleotidase deficiency
M - Medication - Drug induced immune hemolytic anemias
A - Antibodies, autoimmune
T - Trauma to the red cells. Fragmentation (Microangiopathic)
O - Ovalocytosis - This is an autosomal dominant disorder seen in people from South East Asia. Signs and symptoms are minimal.
L - Liver disease .
O - Osmotic fragility in Hereditary spherocytosis and in Hereditary Elliptocytosis
G - Glucose - 6 - Phosphate Dehydrogenase Deficiency (G6PD)
I - Infection: Intra-erythrocytic parasites (malaria and babesiosis)
S - Splenic destruction in hypersplenism. Splenomegaly,
T - Transfusion related
- Thalassemias - [Index](#)

*ARTHRITIS: "ARTHRITICS"

A - Autoimmune Arthritis
Amyloidosis
R - Rheumatic Fever
T - Trauma Acute or Chronic (DJD)
H - Hepatitis Type B
Hypertrophic Pulmonary
Osteoarthropathy
R - Reiter's Syndrome
I - Infection/Septic Joint (GC,SBE)
T - Treponema - Lyme Disease,
Syphilis
I - Infarction :sickle cell disease, avascular
necrosis, Osteochondritis Dissecans
C - Crystals: Gout (urate) and pseudogout
(calcium)
S - Sarcoidosis
Serum Sickness [Index](#)

*AUTOIMMUNE ARTHRITIS: "SUPPRESS"

S - SLE
U - Ulcerative Bowel Disease
P - Psoriasis
P - Polymyositis - Dermatomyositis

R - Rheumatoid and Juvenile RA
E - Erythema Nodosum
S - Scleroderma
S - Sjogrens
Spondylitis/Ankylosing

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***ATRIAL FIBRILLATION: "IRREGULAR P WAVES"**

I - Infarction: myocardial
Intoxication ETOH
R - Rheumatic Heart Disease
R - Recent Thoracotomy
E - Endocrine - Hyperthyroid
G - Geriatric
U - Unknown - Idiopathic
L - Lung Disease - COPD
A - Atherosclerotic Heart Disease
R - Reduced Oxygen - Hypoxia

P - Pericarditis

W - Worry/Stress
A - Atrial Septal Defect
V - Valvular Lesion - Mitral
E - Embolus - Pulmonary
S - Systemic Arterial Hypertension

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***BACK PAIN : "DISK MASS"**

D - Degeneration: DJD, Osteoporosis, Spondylosis
I - Infection: UTI, PID, Potts, Osteo, Prostatitis
- Injury/Fracture, compression fracture
S - Spondylitis, Ankylosing
- Spondyloarthropathies (Rheumatoid, Reiter's, SLE.....)
K - Kidney stones/infarction-infection (Pyelonephritis /abscess)
M - Multiple Myeloma, - Metastasis from breast, prostate, lung, thyroid, kidney CA
A - Aneurysm - Abdominal
S - Slipped Disk, Spondylolisthesis, Spinal Stenosis
S - Strain, Scoliosis/lordosis - Skin: Herpes Zoster

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***BRADYCARDIA: "BRADYCARDIAS"**

B - Beta Blockers
R - Rising intracranial pressure
A - Athlete
D - Digoxin intoxication
Y - Yellow jaundice Biliary obstruction
C - Carotid sinus sensitivity
A - Acute nephritis with hypertension
R - Reserpine
D - Decreased thyroid hypothyroid
Decreased temperature hypothermic
I - Infections: mycoplasma, diphtheria, influenza
Infarction/myocardial usually inferior

A - A-V node dysfunction/Blocks

S - S-A node dysfunction

Sick sinus syndrome

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*CHEST PAIN: "An Aching Heart Can Play A Part"

A - AORTIC DISSECTION

A - ANXIETY: Hyperventilation

Syndrome (Diagnosis of exclusion!)

H - HEART: Angina - effort and spasm

Acute Myocardial Infarction

Valvular - AI,MS,MVP,IHSS

C - CHEST WALL PAIN: Trauma, Fracture

strain, Herpes Zoster, costochondritis,

Tietze's syndrome, Breast lesions

P - PLEURITIC PAIN: "Five P's of pleuritic pain"

Pericarditis, Pulmonary Embolus, Pneumothorax

Pleurisy: infiltrate or inflammation, Pneumomediastinum

A - ABDOMINAL CAUSES: Peptic Ulcer Disease, gall stones

Esophagitis, Reflux, Pancreatitis

P - PERICARDIAL DISEASE

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CLOTTING DISORDERS

Bleeding too much – CALF DIPS

C - Cirrhosis/Liver Disease and Coumadin

A - Aspirin and other drugs NSAIDs

L - Leukemia, Lupus anticoagulant

F - Factor Deficiency – Hemophilia

D - Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation

I - Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura

P - Platelet Deficiency (TTP, HUS, DIC, Heparin- HIT) or

Platelet Dysfunction (vWD)

S - Scurvy: Vitamin C Deficiency

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Clotting too Much – "5 Ps HAD CAUSED CLOTS"

P - Pregnancy - Increased blood viscosity, fibrinogen and factor VIII.

Post Partum - Hypercoagulable state

P – Prothrombin 20210 mutation,

P - Protein S, C, deficient – Inherited

P - Polycythemia vera - increased viscosity

P – Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria

S- Smoking

H – HIT Heparin Induced Thrombocytopenia

Hyperhomocysteinemia

A – Antithrombin III Deficiency

D – Dysfibrinogenemia

C – CHF or Congestive Heart Failure

A – Antiphospholipid Syndrome

U – Uremia – Chronic Renal Failure

S – Surgery – Orthopedic is greatest risk

E – Estrogen

D – Diabetes

C - Cholesterol elevation, Cancer - procoagulant effects,
L – Leiden Factor V mutation – Activated Protein C resistance
O – Obesity and Cholesterol elevation
T - Trauma, Travel (immobility) - Stasis of blood flow and release of tissue thromboplastin in trauma
T – Thyroid disease hyper or hypo
S – Sepsis [Index](#)

CLUBBING: "CLUB"

C - Cardiac: SBE, Congenital heart disease
-Congenital clubbing - benign
L - Lung: Carcinoma, chronic infection (TB..)
U - Ulcerative Bowel disease
B - Biliary Cirrhosis [Index](#)

*COMA - ALTERED MENTAL STATUS :
"ACUTE CLOUDING"

A - Alcohol excess/withdrawal (DTs)
Anaphylaxis
Anemia - acute blood loss (GI,Trauma,...)
C - CVA bleed or blockage
Carbon Monoxide
U - Upper motor Neuron lesion/mass/mets
T - Trauma - subdural, concussion, contusion
Temperature problem, hyperthermia, hypothermia
E - Epilepsy - postictal state or status seizures
Endocrine - hyper/hypo thyroid, hyper/hypo adrenal, hyper/hypo pituitary
Electrolytes - hyper/hypo Na, hyper/hypo Ca, hyper/hypo Mg, hyper/hypo K
Eclampsia

C - Cardiovascular - pump failure
- MI, Tamponade, Hypertensive crisis
L - Liver failure (Hepatic encephalopathy)
Lupus cerebritis
O - Oxygen deficiency - hypoxia from any cause
U - Uremia/Renal failure

D - Drugs excess/withdrawal
(dilatant, sedatives, opiates, salicylates)
I - Infection - CNS (meningitis, encephalitis...),
Systemic
N - Nutritional - Thiamin - Wernicke's encephalopathy
Niacin, B12
G - Glucose -Hypoglycemia/ Hyperosmolar coma [Index](#)

*COUGH: "HACKING"

H - Hilar adenopathy: Sarcoid, TB, Hodgkins...
A - Aneurysm, Asthma, Bronchospasm
Aspiration, Autoimmune Lung DZ
C - Congestive Heart Failure
Cerumen Impaction
K - Killer Neoplasms
I - Infections: Viral, Bacterial,
TB, Fungal...Pneumonia/Bronchitis
Infarcted Lung - PE
Inhalation - occupational

N - Nasal Drip
G - Growth on vocal cord

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***CRAMPS - MUSCULAR: "CRAMPS"**

C - Calcium deficiency
R - Rupture of tendon, Rhabdomyolysis
A - Arterial Insufficiency, claudication
M - Magnesium deficiency, Myotonia
P - Potassium deficiency, Polymyalgia Rheumatica
S - Strain/overuse of muscle

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DEMENTIA: "DEMENTIAS"

D - Drugs: Sedatives, Bromide, Narcotics, Atropine
Dopamine decrease - Parkinson's
E - Endocrine: Hypothyroid,
Hypoglycemia, Hyperparathyroid
M - Metabolic: Renal/Hepatic failure,
hyponatremia
E - Emotional
N - Nutritional: Deficient Thiamin, Niacin, B12
Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus
T - Tumor in CNS
Trauma-subdural hematoma
Thyroid - Myxedema
I - Infections: TB, SBE, Crypto, Herpes, AIDS,
Syphilis, Creutzfeldt-Jakob, Mad Cow...
A - Atherosclerosis, CVA, ALS,
Arteritis
Alzheimer's
S - Sensory Deficit: Hearing or
Vision loss

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DIARRHEA: "DIARRHEAL"

D - Drugs: Laxatives, antibiotics, colchicine,
digoxin,
Diverticulitis
I - Irritable Bowel Syndrome
Infarction of bowel
Infection: Viral - Most common
Bacterial - Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter, Yersinia, C. Difficile
Toxin - Staph, Cholera, Botulism, E. Coli,
Vibrio
Protozoa - Giardia, amebiasis
AIDS
A - Autoimmune - Ulcerative Colitis, Crohn's
Appendicitis
R - Rapid Transit - Dumping Syndrome
R - Renal Failure
H - Hypersecretory - Zollinger Ellison
E - Endocrine - Hyperthyroid, Diabetes, Addisons
A - Absorption Problem - Pancreatic Insufficiency
L - Lesion/Neoplasm

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***DISSEMINATED INTRAVASCULAR COAGULATION: "D.I.C.s"**

D - Disseminated Infection/Sepsis

I - Intrauterine Pregnancy: Toxemia,
Abruptio, Dead fetus
C - Carcinomas
S - Shock , Stroke (Heat) [Index](#)

***DYSPNEA - SHORTNESS OF BREATH:**
"ACUTE DYSPNEA"

A - Asthma - Airway obstruction
Angioneurotic Edema
Aspiration, Altitude sickness
C - COPD
Carbon Monoxide toxicity
U - Upper Motor Neuron Lesion or Event
T - Tracheal Obstruction, Tamponade
E - Endocrine: Hyperthyroid
Environmental Inhalation

D - Deformed Chest Wall: Flail Chest,
Y - hYperventilation syndrome

S - Sarcoid, Shock

P - 5 P's of Pleuritic Pain:
Pericarditis,
Pulmonary Embolus,
Pneumomediastinum
Pleurisy/pneumonia,
Pneumothorax

N - Neoplasm

E - Edema/Pulmonary: Cardiac and
Non-cardiac

A - Anemia
Acidosis: DKA, AKA, Salicylism [Index](#)

***EAR ACHE: "OTITIS"**

O - Other referred pain: parotid, tooth, lymphadenitis
T - TM Joint
I - Infection: Otitis Media/Externa, Bullous Myringitis
T - Trauma: Q-Tip, Blunt injury
I - Impaction: Cerumen, Insect, Foreign Body
S - Syndrome, Ramsey Hunt facial neuralgia [Index](#)

***EYE INFLAMATION - RED EYE: "IRITIS"**

I - Increased Pressure: Acute closed angle glaucoma
R - Reduced Tears:Keratoconjunctivitis Sicca
I - Iritis, Iridocyclitis
T - Trauma: Entropion, abrasion, foreign body
I - Infection: Conjunctivitis -
Bacterial, viral, allergic, irritative
,chemical, autoimmune
S - Scleritis/Episcleritis
Subconjunctival hemorrhage [Index](#)

***HEADACHE: "VINT HEENT"**

V - VASCULAR:
Migraine, Cluster, CVA, TIA, AVM, Temporal
Arteritis, SABLEed, hypertension,

I - INFECTION: CNS -

Meningitis, Abscess, Encephalitis

SYSTEMIC- Viral syndrome

- INCREASED INTRACRANIAL PRESSURE:

Pseudotumor Cerebri

N - NEOPLASM: Tumor, Mets

T - TRAUMA: Subdural Hematoma

TENSION: Most common HA cause

TOXIN: Carbon Monoxide Toxicity

TAP: post lumbar puncture

H - HEAD: Neuralgia, C - Spine Disease, Scalp Lesions

E - EYE: Acute Closed Angle Glaucoma, Strain

E - EAR: Otitis, Mastoiditis

N - NOSE: Sinusitis

T - TM JOINT: TMJ syndrome

THROAT: URI, Viral syndrome, Bacterial
pharyngitis...

TOOTHACHE

TAP- Post LP tap

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*HEMATURIA: "POPS GOT HEMATURIA"

P - Papillary necrosis,

Polyarteritis nodosa,

O - Osler-Weber-Randu

P - Prostatitis

S - Stricture

Sickle Cell Disease or Trait

G - Glomerulonephritis

Goodpasture's Syndrome

O - Other Source such as Menstrual Blood

T - Tumor: Bladder, Kidney, Prostate

H - Hemorrhagic Cystitis

E - Exercise, Endocarditis

M - Medication - Analgesics

Malignant Hypertension

A - Autoimmune Disease: SLE, Polyarteritis

T - Trauma to GU Tract

U - Urethritis

R - Renal Calculi

I - Infarction: SBE, Sickle Cell, ITP, TTP

A - Allergic Nephropathies: Henoch - Schlein Purpura [Index](#)

*HEMOPTYSIS : "HEMOPTYSIS"

H - Hereditary hemorrhagic

telangiectasia

E - Epistaxis

M - Mitral stenosis

O - Oropharyngeal lesion

P - Pulmonary Embolus,

Pulmonary Edema

Pulmonary hypertension

T - Tumors, carcinomas

Y - CYstic Fibrosis

S - Sequestration
I - Infection - Bronchitis, Bronchiectasis, fungus,
abscess, pneumonia, TB
S - Swallowed foreign body [Index](#)

***HICCUPS (PROLONGED): "HICCUPS"**

H - Hilar Adenopathy
I - Intake of excessive Alcohol Smoke
C - Cardiac: Inferior MI
C - Carcinoma
U - Upper Motor Neuron Lesion
P - Pneumonia
S - Subdiaphragmatic Irritation [Index](#)

***HOARSENESS (PROLONGED): "HOARSENESS"**

H - Hilar Adenopathy: TB, Sarcoid
O - Occupational: Singer...
A - Aneurysm
R - Rheumatoid Arthritis
S - SLE Ulceration
E - Edema of the Vocal Cords
N - Neoplasm of the Vocal Cords or lung
E - Endocrine: Hypothyroid
S - Sjogrens: Salivary Deficiency
S - Syphilitic/TB Ulcer on cords [Index](#)

***HYPERCALCEMIA: "CALCEMIAS"**

C - Carcinoma
A - Antacids containing Calcium
L - Lymphoma, Leukemia, Hodgkin's, Low phosphate
C - Calcium Supplements
E - Endocrine: Hyperparathyroid,
Thyroid disease hyperthyroid
M - Multiple Myeloma
Metastatic Lesions to Bone
Milk-alkali syndrome
I - Iatrogenic: Thiazide Diuretics, Vitamin D
A - Addison's Disease, Acromegaly
S - Sarcoid [Index](#)

***HYPERTENSION "PRESSURE"**

P - Pheochromocytoma;
Polycythemia,
Pre-eclampsia/Eclampsia
R - Renovascular (7%)
E - Endocrine: Hyperthyroid,
Cushing, Aldosteronism,
Hyperparathyroid
S - Substances: Estrogens (BSP),
Caffeine, Cocaine,
sympathomimetics, ETOH withdrawal
S - Structural: Coarctation, AI,
Arteriosclerosis
U - Upper Motor Neuron Problem:
Elevated intracranial pressure
R - Renoparenchymal (0.5%):

Glomerulonephritis, Diabetic nephropathy
E - Essential: 90% of hypertension
Error in cuff size [Index](#)

*JAUNDICE: "HOT THINED SAP"

Pre Liver
H - Hemolytic process
O - Other - Idiopathic
T - Transport problem:
Gilbert's Syndrome,
Crigler Najjar Syndrome

Liver
T - Toxin: Alcohol, carbon tetrachloride..
H - Hereditary: Dubin Johnson, Roter Syndrome
I - Infection: Viral - A,B,C,D, E, Mono, CMV Toxo, Syphilis, Ameba
N - Neoplasm: Hepatoma, Mets
E - End Stage Liver disease: Cirrhosis
D - Drugs: INH, Halothane, Estrogens, NSAIDS, Acetaminophen, PTU, Sulfas
Post- Liver
S - Stones: Gall stones, Sclerosing cholangitis
A - Atresia
P - Pancreatic neoplasm/inflammation [Index](#)

*LYMPHADENOPATHY:"LYMPHNODES"

L - Lues: secondary syphilis
Y - Yersinia Pestis (Plague)
M - Mononucleosis/CMV/Toxo
P - Procainamide (Pronestyl), Phenytoin (Dilantin)
H - Hodgkin's, Lymphomas, leukemia
N - Neoplasm metastasis
O - Obvious local infection or inflammation
Other infections: Hepatitis B, Rubella,
Tularemia, Cat scratch
D - Deficient Immune System AIDS or
preAIDS lymphadenopathy
E - Endocrine - Addisons, Hypothyroid
S - SLE/Rheumatoid arthritis
- Serum sickness
- Sarcoid [Index](#)

*METABOLIC ACIDOSIS WITH A HIGH ANION

GAP "KUSSMAL"
K - Ketoacidosis, DKA
U - Uremia
S - Salicylates
S - Substance Abuse (Ethylene Glycol)
M - Methanol
A - Alcohol, AKA
L - Lactic Acidosis (Shock, Seizure, AMI, Sepsis) [Index](#)

*NASAL CONGESTION: "NOSE HAIRS"

N - Neoplasm
O - Over - reactive mucosa
-vasomotor rhinitis
S - Structural: Polyps, Deviated septum

E - Estrogens: Oral contraceptives, Pregnancy

H - Hypothyroidism

A - Allergic rhinitis

I - Infection: Bacterial, Viral, Fungal

R - Rhinitis Medicamentosa: Rebound
From overuse of nasal spray

S - Substances: Reserpine, Aldomet,

Beta- Blockers, Aspirin [Index](#)

*NODULES, SUBCUTANEOUS: "NODULAR"

N - Neurofibromas

O - Osteoarthritic Heberden's nodules

D - Dupuyten's contracture nodules

U - Urate crystals in gouty tophi

L - Lipids in lipomas and xanthomas

A - Acute Rheumatic Fever

R - Rheumatoid nodules [Index](#)

*PALMAR RASH "PALM GREASE"

P - Psoriasis

A - Atopic Dermatitis

L - Lips: Hand - Foot - Mouth Disease

M - Meningococcemia

G - Gonococcemia

R - Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

E - Erythema Multiforme

A - Allergic/Contact Dermatitis

S - Syphilis - Secondary Lues

E - Eczema [Index](#)

*PANCREATITIS

P - Postoperative, Penetrating peptic ulcer,
Parathyroidism, Pregnancy

A - Alcoholism, AIDS

N - Neoplasm of bile duct or ampula

C - Cholelithiasis *common*

R - Renal failure

E - Estrogens, Elevated lipids

A - Antibiotics (TCN, sulfonamides)

T - Trauma

I - Idiopathic, Infection: Mumps, Viral hepatitis, Legionnaire's, Mycoplasma, Ascaris

T - Thiazides, Lasix

I - Infection: Viral mumps, mono, hepatitis

S - Scorpion bite, Shock [Index](#)

*PEDAL EDEMA - BILATERAL: "Can Large Legs Ruin Thin Veins"

C - Congestive Heart Failure

Constrictive Pericarditis

L - Liver: Cirrhosis, portal hypertension

L - Lymph obstruction

R - Renal: Nephrotic Syndrome

T - Thyroid: Pretibial Myxedema

V - Venous Insufficiency [Index](#)

***PEDAL EDEMA - UNILATERAL "BIG TOES"**

- B - Baker Cyst Rupture, Bleed into muscle
- I - Insufficient Veins
- G - Groin/Pelvic Mass Obstructing Lymph Flow
 - Gout
- T - Thrombophlebitis
 - Trauma/Fracture/Sprain
 - Tendon Rupture - Plantaris Longus or Achilles tendon
- O - Osteomyelitis/Cellulitis
- E - Elephantiasis - Lymph obstruction
- S - Sting/Allergic Reaction to contact or bite [Index](#)

***PERICARDITIS "PERICARDITIS"**

- P - Post Traumatic
- E - Endocrine: Hypothyroid
- R - Renal Failure
- I - Infection: TB, Viral, Fungal, AIDS, Bacterial
- C - Collagen Vascular Disease (SLE, RA)
- A - Aneurysm
- R - Rheumatic Fever- Radiation
- D - Drugs: Hydralazine, Minoxidil, Procainamide
- I - Infarction - AMI
- TI - Tumor Invasion
- S - Syphilis, Scleroderma, Serum Sickness [Index](#)

***PHARYNGITIS: "THROAT PAIN"**

- T - Thyroiditis
- H - Herpangina, Hodgkin's
- R - Retropharyngeal abscess
- O - Oral ulcers: Aphthous, Syphilis, TB, Herpes
- A - Angioneurotic edema
- T - Toothache/abscess

P - Peritonsillar abscess

A - Angina: Vincent's, Ludwig's

I - Infection: Bacterial -

Streptococcus (Group B and G), GC

H FLU, Mycoplasma, Diphtheria Viral-Mono, CMV, Herpes, Influenza, HIV/AIDS...

Fungal - Candida (Immunosuppression)

Other - Syphilis, Chlamydia, Toxic shock

N - Neoplasm [Index](#)

***PLEURITIC CHEST PAIN: "5 Ps"**

P - Pneumothorax

**P - Pleurisy from Pneumonia,
Infarction, Inflammation**

P - Pulmonary Embolus/Infarction

P - Pneumomediastinum

P - Pericarditis [Index](#)

***PRURITIS: "ITCHING"**

I - Insulin Deficiency: Diabetes

T - Thyroid: Hyper or Hypo

C - Conjugated Bilirubin: Jaundice

- Calcium: Hyper or Hypo
- H - Hodgkins, Leukemia, Lymphoma
 - Heat: Dry skin, Hyperthyroidism
- Hookworm
- I - Increased RBC's: Polycythemia Vera
 - Intrauterine Pregnancy
- N - Non Organic: Neurodermatitis, Anxiety, Drugs
- G - Glomerular Disease: Uremia [Index](#)

SEIZURES "GRAND MALS"

- G - Glucose too low
- R - Rising Blood Pressure, Toxemia - Eclampsia
 - Rye's syndrome, Renal failure
- A - Alcohol Withdrawal
- N - Neoplasm, Primary or Mets
 - Neurological Infections - meningitis
- D - Drugs, Overdose or withdrawal
- M - Metabolic: Hepatic/Renal Failure, Hypothyroid
- A - Arterial Disease: CVA, AVM, TIA, Aortic Dissection, Arrhythmia
- L - Lytes: Hypo Na, Ca, Mg
- S - Subdural Hematoma
- Subarachnoid Bleed [Index](#)

*SHOCK: "AMS" and "CRASH"

- A - Acute neurologic event/trauma (brain injury)
- M - Metabolic/toxic cause (brain insulted from blood born toxin, infection, chemistry imbalance).
- S - Shock - Mnemonic "CRASH"
 - (brain is not receiving blood)
- C - Cardiogenic
- R - Rapid blood or water loss
- A - Anaphylaxis
- S - Septic
- H - Head injury (BP regulation center) [Index](#)

*SHOULDER PAIN "CAPSULITIS"

- C - Cuff Problem - Rotator Cuff rupture
- A - Arthritis (see Differential Diagnosis)
 - Avascular Necrosis (Sickle Cell)
- P - Plexus Problems - Brachial Plexus
- S - Spondylosis - DJD Cervical Spine
 - with Nerve Root irritation
- U - Under Diaphragm Irritation: Free Air, Blood, Pancreatitis, Spleen, Cholecystitis, Peritonitis
- L - Lung Causes: Pancoast Tumor, PE, Pulmonary Infarction
- I - Ischemia - Cardiac referred. Arteritis, Atherosclerosis
- T - Tendonitis/Bursitis
 - Trauma
 - Thoracic Outlet Syndrome
- I - Inflamed Soft Tissues: Fibrositis
- S - Spinal Cord Lesion/Tumor [Index](#)

*SIADH "SIADH" (URINE OSMO/SODIUM INCREASED)(SERUM OSMO/SODIUM DECREASED)

S - Surgery Post Op

I - Infection: CNS - meningitis,

Lung - TB, Fungal, Bacterial

A - Anti - Diuretic Hormone Producing
Tumor

D - Drugs: Narcotics, Diuretics...

H - Head Lesion CNS trauma, tumor, CVA [Index](#)

*SICKLE CELL DISEASE COMPLICATIONS: "HBSS PAIN CRISIS"

H - Hemolysis, Hand - Foot syndrome

B - Bone Marrow Hyperplasia/Infarction

S - Skin ulcers (primarily leg)

S - Stroke: Sub Arrachnoid Bleeds/Thrombotic

P - Pain Crisis, Priapism, Psychosocial Problems

A - Aplastic Crisis, Anemia,
Avascular Necrosis

I - Infections: CNS, Bone, Joints, GU, Pulmonary

N - Narcotic side effects/ tolerance/ dependence

C - Cholelithiasis, Cardiomegally,
Congestive Heart Failure

R - Retinopathy, Renal Failure,
Renal concentrating Defect

I - Infarction: Bone, Muscle, CNS,
Bowel, Renal, Spleen

S - Sequestration Crisis: Spleen/Liver

I - Infertility

S - Sepsis [Index](#)

STRIDOR "GASPER"

G – Glottic blockage: food or foreign body

A – Angioneurotic Edema

S – Sub Glottic lesion nodule or neoplasm

P – Peritonsillar Abscess

E – Epiglottitis

R- Retropharyngeal Abscess [Index](#)

SYNCOPE – "SYNCOPAL FAINT"

S- Seizure

Y – hYperventilation, hYsteria

N – Neuropathy (Diabetic)

C – Cardiac : Arrhythmia, MI, IHSS, AS, Pump failure

O- Orthostatic syncope

P – Pedal Pooling from venous insufficiency

A – Arterial insufficiency

L- Low Blood Volume: Bleeding, dehydration

F- Fainting – Vasovagal

A – Adrenal Insufficiency (Addisons Disease)

I – Iatrogenic from Medications

N – Nutritional (Not eating, hypoglycemia)

T – Toxin: alcohol and others [Index](#)

***URINARY FREQUENCY "VOIDED"**

- V - Vaginitis irritating urethra
- O - Obstruction: Prostate, Bladder Stone, Cystocele
Osmotic Particles: Protein
- I - Intrauterine Pregnancy
- Infection in Urethra, Bladder, Kidney, Appendix
- D - Diabetes: Mellitus or Insipidus
- E - Electrolytes: Hyper K, Ca, Na
- D - Drugs: Caffeine, Diuretics...
- Drinking Excessive Fluids [Index](#)

***VAGINITIS: "VAG ITCH"**

- V - Vaginal irritant: Spermicide,
douche, tampon, non - cotton clothing
- A - Atrophic vaginitis from estrogen deficiency
- G - Gardnerella (Clue cells) Gonococcus
- I - Infection: PID, Salpingitis Infestation: Lice...
- T - Trichomonas
- C - Candida, Carcinoma, Chlamydia
- H - Herpes [Index](#)

***VERTIGO: "SICK SPIN"**

- S - Salicylates - aspirin toxicity also other NSAIA
- I - Infection: Bacterial - otitis media Viral - labyrinthitis, Herpes,
- C - Cerebellar tumor, TIA, infarct, degeneration
- K - Klog: cerumen impaction

- S - Subclavian steal, Sea sick - motion
- P - Positional vertigo
- I - Infrequent: Miniere's disease
- N - Neuroma (Acoustic) [Index](#)

***WHEEZING: "ASTHMATIC"**

- A-Aneurysm
- Asthma, Bronchospasm
- Aspiration
- S - Smoke or irritant inhalation
- T - Thyroid enlargement causing obstruction
- H - Heart Failure - Pulmonary Edema
- M - Medication (Aspirin, Beta Blocker)
- A - Anaphalaxis
- Angioedema
- T - Tumor, Thyroid
- I - Infection: Pneumonia, Bronchitis,
- Infarction - Pulmonary Embolus, Sickle Cell Chest Syndrome
- C - Cystic Fibrosis [Index](#)

***The Medical History - Sections**

Chiefly History from the Past tells your Family Social Review (CC, HPI, PMH, FH, SH, ROS)

CC = Chief Complaint in patient's own words and duration.

*HPI = History of Present Illness including the LOCATES:

- L – Location and radiation
- O - Other associated symptoms
- C - Character
- A - Alleviating and aggravating factors

T – Timing, constant/intermittent, happened in past
E - Environment or setting
S - Severity or disability (0 - 10 scale)

*PMH = Past Medical History: A HISTORY:

A - Allergies,
H - Hospitalizations,
I – Illnesses /major - Immunizations,
S - Surgeries,
T- Trauma,
O - Oral medications,
R - Reproductive history, contraception
Y - Youth illnesses. [Index](#)

* FH = Family History - Pedigree, genetic diseases, household contacts. Cover family history of cancer , diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, anemia, arthritis

*SH = Social History: FLAMES

F - Family, Food
L - Lifestyle
A - Abuse of substances and of the body
M - Marital or significant other relationships.
E - Employment ,
S - Support Systems: home life, friends, family, Religion
Sexual and or Spiritual history if appropriate [Index](#)

*ROS Review of Systems:

General Endo-Head Loves Brass, Crass And Gas to Pass Near the Mass.

GEN = General and skin: Weight change, fever/chills, night sweats, Skin rash, itching, mole change, skin cancer, abnormal bleeding or bruising, anemia, pica, HIV risk factors, lymphadenopathy, fatigue,

EN = Endocrine: Hot/cold intolerance, thyroid goiter, nodules or radiation, diabetes, increased thirst or appetite

HE = Head - pain, Ear- pain, tinnitus, hearing loss, vertigo, Eye – pain, vision change, glaucoma, redness, excessive tearing/ discharge, cataracts Nose - sinusitis, epistaxis, blockage, Throat/Mouth-pharyngitis, hoarseness, postnasal drip, Teeth – cavities, abscess, Gums- Bleeding, lesions

LU = Lung : dyspnea, cough, sputum production , hemoptysis, wheezing, TB, PPD, CXR, pneumonia, asthma, bronchitis, smoking, environmental inhalation

BR = Breast: nodule, discharge, chest wall or breast pain – tenderness, self exam

CV = Cardiovascular : Exercise level, orthopnea, PND – paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea, DOE- dyspnea on exertion, chest pain or discomfort, palpitations, syncope, edema, claudication, CV drugs, hypertension, DVT – blood clots, past heart disease. Rheumatic fever, family history heart disease/clotting. leg/foot ulcers, varicose veins

AB = Abdominal : nausea, vomiting, hematemesis, dysphagia, indigestion, heartburn/ dyspepsia/GERD, abdominal pain, swelling, jaundice, hematochezia, melena, change in stool caliber, diarrhea, constipation, hernias, hemorrhoids, peptic ulcer disease /PUD, surgery, gallbladder disease, pancreatitis, liver disease, hepatitis, alcohol intake.

GU = Genitourinary: urinary frequency, urgency, dysuria, nocturia, hematuria, flow, hesitancy, incontinence, urethral discharge, genital lesions, , STD sexually transmitted diseases, UTIs, stones, flank pain, family history renal disease.

Males: prostate, testicular mass/pain, erectile dysfunction; Females: age at menarche/menopause, LMP, amount and duration of flow, pelvic pain, vaginal discharge, abnormal bleeding, amenorrhea, pelvic mass, pregnancies. Both: birth control method, sexual history.

PSY = Psychiatric: previous psych problems or hospitalizations, interpersonal relationships, mood swings, anxiety/nervousness, depression, hallucinations, loss of control, vegetative dysfunction (sleep, eating, pleasure activities), substance abuse, suicidal thoughts and plans

NE = Neurologic: Headaches, seizures, episodic neurologic symptoms (talking, walking, seeing..)

impaired speech, paresthesias, weakness, head trauma, stroke, dizziness, tremor, confusion, memory loss, gait problems

MS = Musculoskeletal: joint pain/arthritis, stiffness, swelling, muscle cramps, family history.

ANGER [Index](#)

- A - acknowledge and apologize
("I'm sorry you feel angry about this")
- N - no negative responses
- G - gather the facts - hear person out
- E - empathize
- R - resolve what you can

*ANXIOUS - The Patient with Fear [Index](#)

- A. -Acknowledge fear as the emotion seen
- F.- Face the object feared
- R.- Real or Imagined fears
- A. -Allow the patient to vent fears
- I.- Infuse with knowledge
- D. -Develop plan together to address fears

*DEPRESSED PATIENT-SYMPTOMS [Index](#)

- F - Flat Affect
- L - Low love life
- A - Apathy
- T - Tired

- L - Low Self Esteem
- I - Insomnia
- N - No fun in life
- E - Eating Disorders

*TO HELP DEPRESSION [Index](#)

- G - good things in life
- R - restore hope
- A - acknowledge depression
- S - suicidal thoughts and plans
- P - plan for support

*DEMANDING - DEPENDANT - MANIPULATIVE

- R- reflect back patient responsibilities
- E - empathize
- F- find out any hidden agendas
- L - limit personal involvement
- E - expectations must be clear
- C - calm yourself
- T - time constraints on interview
- S - staff splitting is common [Index](#)

RAMBLING – “LOST”

- L –Limit Time
- O – Observe the main reason for the visit
- S- Stop the wrong direction gently
- T- Take conversation back on track [Index](#)

*RETICENT (Quiet or Shy) PATIENT

O - Open ended questions
P - Pointed questions
E - Encourage talking
N - Notice secondary causes: depression,
dementia, denial [Index](#)

***Setting the Stage: KNOCKS PRIVATELY**

K - Knock on the door - do not barge in
N - Never uses titles like "honey" or "sweetie"; use respectful sir titles like Mr., Ms....
O - Open ended questions to start with: "What can I do for you?"
C - Comfort; ask if you can make them more comfortable
K - Keep quiet after asking the main question. Let them respond for at least 2 minutes.
S - Space between bodies. Maintain proper Body Space

P - Privacy. Interview in private if possible, or a look of privacy
R - Read the chart ahead of time. Learn about the individual if you can.
I - Introduction - Introduce yourself and shake hands
V - Voice tone and inflection are important
A - Ask about family, hobbies, or interests as an ice breaker and a show of concern
T - Titles - Use the appropriate sir title for the patient and not first name
E - Eye level, be at eye level
L - Look the part, be professional
Y - Your role on the health care team [Index](#)

***Facilitation - I CAN KEEP INTEREST GOING.**

I - "I'm listening"

C - Confrontation - You say you don't know what brings on these headaches, yet before every episode you describe a stressful event."

A - Ask for clarification "What do you mean by dizziness"

N - No Shopping list questions are banned, like "do you have nausea, vomiting or diarrhea?"

K - Keep Quiet, do not interrupt, use silence to keep the patient talking

E - Empathize: " I understand why you felt that way".

E - Eye contact

P - Phrase repetition; repeat the last phrase back to the patient

I - Interpretation - you interpret your patient's words or behavior, "You say you 're not angry, but your words express anger."

N - Nod in approval

T - "Tell me more"

E - Energize the conversation with hand gestures and face animation.

R - Reflection. Repetition of the last statement

E - Encourage continuation with "Ah ha, Hmmm...."

S - Summarize the conversation back to the individual "Let me repeat your history to see if I have it right."

T - Take notes sparingly

G - Glad you came; legitimize the visit

O - Open ended questions first

I - Involve the patient's ideas about what is going on, "What do you think?"

N - No leading questions, "You don't have chest pain, do you?"

G - "Go on" [Index](#)

***Giving Bad News: "STOP AND PRAY**

S. Setting the Stage a. Privacy, schedule time, empathy and provide for comfort.
b. Ask patient who they want to be with them, ask permission.

- c. Approach as "we've got some decisions to make"
- d. Eye contact, speak slowly, clearly, no medical jargon.
- T. Test the patient's knowledge up to that point.
- O. Oppositions: Is the patient in pain, tired or under medications?
- P. Patient education tools with patient reflection to show understanding.
- A. Acknowledge and validate patient emotions and reactions.
- N. Never take HOPE away
- D. Define Support Systems
 - D. Describe unknown support systems: Hospice, counselors, clergy....
- P - Pray: If you are of like faith, offer to pray for the patient. Prayer keeps hope alive
- R - Referrals and follow-up. Make close follow-up appointments
 - Make consultations and referrals to consultants who will support patient
 - Let patient know how to reach you (via service or office) Call them at home to support them. Call if questions
- A- Alternatives for treatment, study protocols... Medline or Internet resources (NIH, NCI....) Warnings about alternative treatments. Patients on study do better
- Y- Your mental health
 - You need to be comfortable with your mortality. Have a healthy way to vent
 - Know how to recognize and prevent burn-out Have a good life - remember what is really important.

[Index](#)

Thanks to the "Great Physician":

- J - Justifies
- E - Everyone
- S - Seeking
- U - Undeserved
- S - Salvation (Eternal life, healing, health, deliverance, peace, and provision)

[Index](#)