

Is This Normal for Someone My Age?: Problem Handouts



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Part 1

Patient History:

Eleanor, a 88-year-old widow and mother of two visits RediMed late on a Sunday afternoon. Her chief complaint to the physician is that she is having recurring urinary tract problems. Because her family physician retired a few months ago Eleanor does not currently have a "regular" physician. Because of this, and the fact that it is Sunday, Eleanor decided to come to RediMed. RediMed is a local clinic in the shopping mall that is staffed by a rotating series of physicians.

Eleanor's chief complaints are:

- Increased urge to urinate, and a "slight" inability to control her urinary process.
- Recurring bouts of pain upon urination.
- The patient has had a previous radical mastectomy.
- The patient demonstrates mild hypertension, for which she is on regular medication.
- The patient complains of chronic back aches that do not respond to OTC pain medication.

Physical Examination:

- Blood pressure while medicated is 145/92.
- The patient mentions a mild "back ache" pain localized to the regions of rib 11 and lower on the left side, and rib 12 and lower on the right.
- Due to her lack of familiarity with the physician and fear of embarrassment, the patient is reluctant to undergo a physical examination. The physician informs that patient that an inability to control the urinary sphincter is quite common among elderly patients, as are urinary tract infections.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is a possible cause for the back pain the patient is experiencing? Give a solid anatomical and physiological rationale for your answer.
2. Is the patient's age an important factor in the physician's diagnosis? Explain and defend your answer from both an anatomical and a physiological perspective.

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Part 2

Fifteen days later, the pain has recurred. In addition, Eleanor's symptoms have become more severe and slightly modified since her most recent visit to RediMed. Mary, her daughter-in-law, advises Eleanor to seek an appointment with her gynecologist. Eleanor agrees, and Mary makes the appointment for later that day.

Eleanor reviews the information presented to the physician at RediMed, and also presents the following additional information to the gynecologist:

- Stress incontinence, in that whenever she coughs, sneezes, or carries something as light as a bag of groceries she cannot prevent from "wetting herself". This problem has not only persisted but worsened in the last few weeks.
- She also complains of having to go to the bathroom to urinate as many as 10 times per day, and 5 or more times at night. This problem has also persisted and worsened in the last few weeks.
- Difficulties with constipation.
- Continued backaches that increase in severity by the end of the day.
- A sensation that "something is coming down" her vagina when she is in the upright position, with a worsening of this sensation by the end of the day.
- Upon further questioning by the gynecologist Eleanor indicates that the stress incontinence and increased frequency of urination has decreased as the sensation that "something is coming down" her vagina has intensified.

Utilizing sound anatomical logic, consider the following questions:

1. What is your diagnosis for the patient?
2. Does this condition have multiple stages? If so, what are they and what differentiates them from each other?
3. Are specific pathological and/or age-related changes in anatomical structures responsible for Eleanor's condition? If so, provide detailed anatomical descriptions of the structures, as to what these age-related and/or pathological changes would be.
4. Is Eleanor's complaint of constipation closely related to her diagnosis, or is it an unrelated symptom? Defend your answer.



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Team and Self Assessment Form

Your name: _____

Please use the rating scale below to describe how you and your team members performed on each of the tasks listed associated with your PBL group's activities. The purpose of the grading is not to divide groups but to reward those making above average effort and to encourage those not giving their fair share to the group overall effort.

5 if Always 4 if Very Often 3 if Sometimes 2 if Rarely 1 if Never

PBL Group Number: _____

Please fill in PBL Group Members' *Last* Names (including your own)

Names _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Completed assigned tasks _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Contributed valuable
information to the group _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Attended group meetings _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Was honest in reporting
progress about his/her
assigned tasks _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Participated in writing
final report _____ _____ _____ _____ _____



Now, ***please circle*** the rating below that you feel you would best describe your group's overall performance:

Very good

Good

Barely Acceptable

Poor

Very Poor



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PBL Self Evaluation Form

This evaluation form will not be utilized in assigning any grades. However, it is beneficial to reflect on any progress that you might have made in various areas as a result of participating in a PBL course. Therefore, please evaluate yourself utilizing the following scale.

Scale:

- 5 = Strongly agree
- 4 = Agree
- 3 = Neutral
- 2 = Disagree
- 1 = Strongly disagree

Your name: _____

As a result of my participation in PBL in Human Anatomy I feel that I have improved in the areas of:

1. Effective group participation _____
2. Effective group communication _____
3. Evaluation of myself (self evaluation) _____
4. Evaluation of others (peer evaluation) _____
5. Acquiring information to solve complex problems _____
6. Evaluation of the quality of information needed
to solve complex problems _____
7. Working effectively with others _____



8. Higher-order, critical thinking skills _____

Overall improvement rating of yourself: _____

5 = excellent; 4 = good; 3 = average; 2 = needs work; 1 = poor

