

Teaching Clinical Judgment Through Cases

Case Scenario	Questions
A 55-year-old patient is admitted to your unit from the emergency department with dizziness and a severe headache with increasing severity. Her current vital signs are temperature 37.4 C, pulse 108 bpm, respirations 24 per minute, and blood pressure 189/106. In the handoff the nurse reports that the patient vomited about 30 minutes ago.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What findings are most significant? 2. What additional information is needed? 3. What questions would you ask the nurse giving the handoff? Why is this information important?
Your ventilated patient has his bed elevated 45°. During his scheduled repositioning and turning, you notice redness on his sacrum. You also notice he keeps slipping down in the bed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What actions should be taken now? 2. Your preceptor discusses the possibility of lowering the bed elevation to about 30°. Is this appropriate for his patient? Why or why not? What evidence supports your answer? 3. If the bed elevation is lowered, what findings would you monitor to determine if this was the best intervention?
A mother brings her 1-month-old infant into the community clinic with reports of poor feeding. After completing your assessment, you notice the child whimpering without tears and that he weighs 6 lbs. 5 oz., the same as his birth weight.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What patient problems/conditions/diagnoses are consistent with these findings? 2. What other assessment finding would you expect? 3. What additional information is needed to support your findings? 4. What questions would you ask the mother?
A 19-year-old transgender male comes to the student health center requesting "the morning after pill." While taking the patient's vital signs, you notice bruises on the patient's extremities and laceration in the inside his mouth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What questions should the nurse ask the patient in the assessment? 2. What additional information is needed to decide what is wrong with this patient? 3. What interventions should be done first? Why? 4. What information would you teach the patient prior to discharge?
A 78-year-old client returns to the extended care facility after having an outpatient CT scan with contrast. The patient refuses dinner and is becoming more agitated. His evening vital signs are temperature 38.1 C, pulse 124 bpm, respirations 28 per min, and blood pressure 89/56. The nurse notices the patient has not voided since before his procedure early this morning.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there data of particular concern to you? Why? 2. Considering possible problems of this patient, what is the priority? Why? 3. What patient problems/conditions/diagnoses are consistent with these findings?

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