

Suggested Answers to Discussion Topics
 Chapter 29, Disorders of Gastrointestinal Function

Suggested Answers for Topics for Discussion	Learning Objective(s)
<p>1a. Students' answers should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nurse would highly suspect that Marilyn has an acute abdomen. • Reflecting on their knowledge of the normal anatomy of the GI tract they would focus on the signs and symptoms that Marilyn is presenting with. • The nurse would have to be knowledgeable of the similarities of conditions that disrupt the integrity and function of both intestines. • Be able to differentiate diverticular disease from other pathology. • In the client's case, the abrupt onset, high temperature, and rigidity of the abdomen would all point to appendicitis. • The nurse would also have to be aware of the potential laboratory and diagnostic testing that would be appropriate in the client's situation. <p>1b. Students' answers should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to differentiate between the small and large intestine disorders would aid the nurse in determining that Marilyn's situation has suddenly become very serious. • She is possibly showing signs of peritonitis, with the potential for septicemia, from the appendix rupturing. • One must then assume that a thorough review of the mechanisms of acute infection and septic shock and its treatment modalities would be warranted. <p>The client would have to be prepared for emergency surgery and would possibly be cared for in an ICU. Notifying and keeping family members informed would also be necessary. Given the client's age and history one can also assume that she does not have any co-morbid conditions that would compromise her health further and that potentially she would make a full recovery.</p>	<p>15, 18, 19</p>
<p>2a. Students' answers should include the following:</p>	<p>13, 16</p>

- The nurse would draw on her knowledge of infections within the intestinal tract.
- Also, a review of infective and inflammatory processes would be needed.
- First, a clear differentiation between viral and bacterial would have to be determined as public health protocols would differ depending on the infective source.
- That is to say a food-ingested cause (such as uncooked meats) would require more vigorous investigation than a viral cause.
- A review of innervation and motility of the GI tract along with the presenting symptoms would help the nurse come to the logical conclusions of viral infection (i.e., Norwalk).
- A major distinguishing factor would be the description of the diarrhea (watery vs. bloody).
- Assurance that the symptoms would resolve in 2 to 3 days along with symptomatic treatments should be emphasized.

2b. Students' answers should include the following:

- The nurse would likely be concerned with the age populace affected with the Norwalk virus.
- The older populations may potentially have other co-morbid conditions that may impact on overall recovery (i.e., type I diabetes or hypertension could impact on fluid and electrolyte and sodium and water balances.).
- The nurse would also want to ensure that all staff and passengers activity be limited to the ship.
- He/she would report to local public health authorities and have appropriate health personnel on stand-by for any complications.