

Case Study, Chapter 39, Assessment of Musculoskeletal Function

1. Martha Smitty, an 81-year-old patient, is admitted to the medical-surgical unit after a recent fall resulting in a fracture of the right hip. (Learning Objective 2)

- a. What areas of information need to be gathered by the nurse during the patient's history? Medications, who she lives with, prior injuries.

2. The nurse in the outpatient orthopedic clinic is reviewing the medical records of several patients being seen in the clinic today. In the most recent note by the primary provider, the nurse reads the following:

"67-year-old, moderately obese woman examined today for increasing back and left shoulder pain. Limited circumduction of left arm noted in comparison with right arm. Strength of left arm is less than right, with less muscle definition in the left arm. Examination of back indicates significant kyphosis, and the patient states that she is 'shrinking.' Bone density testing of the hip is ordered." (Learning Objectives 3 and 4)

- a. How does the nurse interpret "limited circumduction"?
Left arm cannot complete ROM fully.
- b. When the patient arrives, the nurse correlates the "kyphosis" with what physical finding? What causes kyphosis in the older adult?
Abnormal curvature of the spine. Loss of bone production/remodeling ability.
- c. How should the nurse explain the patient's decreasing height?
As we get older, our bone density decreases and bones shorten.
- d. What is the rationale for prescribing bone density testing of the hip in this patient?
To assess the amount of bone loss.