

Case: F/65, Lower Back Pain

DOCTOR: Hello Ms. Meyer. What can I do for you today?

PATIENT: My lower back hurts.

DOCTOR: OK. Can you please show me exactly the location of the pain?

PATIENT: (Patient pointing/touching the part that hurts)

DOCTOR: When did it start?

PATIENT: It started two weeks ago.

DOCTOR: I see. So it has been painful for a while now. What were you doing when the pain started?

PATIENT: I felt a pain on my lower back when I tried to lift my grandson. After that, it has been painful each time I carry something especially when I clean the house.

DOCTOR: Is it becoming worse?

PATIENT: Yes, doctor.

DOCTOR: What is the pain like? Is it sharp, dull or tingling? Do you feel any numbness?

PATIENT: I sometimes feel a tingling sensation.

DOCTOR: Does the pain radiate to any part of your body?

PATIENT: It sometimes radiate to my hip and groin area.

DOCTOR: Score the pain out of 10 with 0 being no pain at all and 10 being the worst pain you have ever experienced

PATIENT: 10

DOCTOR: I'm sorry to hear that. It must be really bad.

PATIENT: It is very painful. Can you just give me some painkillers?

DOCTOR: I know you are in a lot of pain right now. I'll make this real quick for you. And when I'm done, I will give you some medications to ease your pain. The thing is, if I give you painkillers now without knowing the cause of the pain, I might not be able to give you the right treatment. So can you please bear with me for a little while?

PATIENT: OK

DOCTOR: Thank you for the cooperation. Shall we proceed?

PATIENT: Yes

DOCTOR: Have you experienced the same pain before?

PATIENT: No

DOCTOR: Do you have any other complications aside from the pain on your lower back?

PATIENT: My legs hurt sometimes.

DOCTOR: Has there been sensation changes or weakness on your legs and lower back?

PATIENT: I can feel a tingling sensation and numbness on my legs and lower back sometimes.

DOCTOR: Do you have difficulty holding your urine or stool?

PATIENT: No

DOCTOR: Is there anything that makes the pain worse?

PATIENT: It gets worse every time I walk.

DOCTOR: Is there anything that lessens the pain like medications, positional changes, or taking a rest?

PATIENT: I just take some medications and get some rest to ease the pain.

DOCTOR: Are you taking any medications?

PATIENT: I'm taking pain relievers.

DOCTOR: Do you have any drug, food or environmental allergy?

PATIENT: No

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DOCTOR: Do you have any other health problems?

PATIENT: I have hypertension

DOCTOR: What about disc herniation, osteoporosis, or any other major illness?

PATIENT: No

DOCTOR: What about heart problems or diabetes?

PATIENT: No, just hypertension

DOCTOR: Have you ever been hospitalized before?

PATIENT: Yes, because of my hypertension.

DOCTOR: Any surgery, trauma or fracture in the past?

PATIENT: I had a fracture when I was a teenager.

DOCTOR: Is there anyone in the family who has experienced a major illness?

PATIENT: My mother died of heart attack and my father is diabetic.

DOCTOR: Thank you for answering my questions. Is there anything that I missed out? Or anything else that you thing I'd better know?

PATIENT: That's all

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- Give a summary of the patient's problem.
- Give the different parts of assessment/interview.
- Pretend to be the doctor and do an assessment to a patient with the same case.