

# Right Elbow Pain

**Case: M/50s, white, Mr. Worthy, Right Elbow Pain**

**Doctor:** Mr. Worthy, what brought you here today?

**Client:** My right elbow aches.

**Doctor:** I am sorry to hear that. When did the pain start?

**Client:** It started four days ago.

**Doctor:** What were you doing when you got hurt?

**Client:** I was doing a house remodelling.

**Doctor:** Can you give me more details?

**Client:** When I worked, I overstretched my right elbow as I tried to reach something.

**Doctor:** Do you have the pain all the time? Or the pain come and goes?

**Client:** It's here all the time.

**Doctor:** Do you think it's getting worse?

**Client:** Yes.

**Doctor:** What is the pain like?

**Client:** It's as if the muscles are being pulled.

**Doctor:** Is there anything that makes the pain go away? Have you taken any medication?

**Client:** Well, I took some pain relievers but it did little help.

**Doctor:** Do you have any other symptoms? Redness? Swelling? Warmth? Any bruises?

**Client:** I have redness and swelling and this started three days ago.

**Doctor:** Any weakness? Sensational changes? Numbness?

**Client:** No, I don't feel anything unusual.

**Doctor:** What about fever? Chills? Night sweats? Fatigue? Rash? Headache? Cough? Runny nose? Sore throat? Shortness of breath? Chest pain? Or nausea and vomiting?

**Client:** No, none at all.

## Test Your Knowledge

- What do you think could be the possible cause of the patient's problem?
- What is rationale for asking the patient about any feeling of shortness of breath or chest pain?

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**Doctor:** Do you have high blood pressure? Diabetes?

**Client:** I have hypertension and my cholesterol level is high.

**Doctor:** Do you have any other medical problems of the heart? Lungs? Or Kidneys?

**Client:** No.

**Doctor:** Have you ever been hospitalized?

**Client:** Yes, due to osteoarthritis and gout at my great toe

**Doctor:** Any surgeries? Any trauma? Or Fracture?

**Client:** I haven't had any of them.

**Doctor:** Did you take medication for your high blood pressure and cholesterol?

**Client:** Yes, I took Hydrochlorothiazide and Atorvastatin.

**Doctor:** Do you have any allergies?

**Client:** No, I don't have.

**Doctor:** Now, I'm going to ask you some personal questions which can be very helpful to figure this out. Is this okay with you?

**Client:** Yes doctor.

**Doctor:** Thank you. Is there anybody around you being sick now?

**Client:** My daughter just had fever last week.

**Doctor:** Is there anybody in the family who have medical problem?

**Client:** My mother has arthritis.

## Test Your Knowledge

- What do you think could be the possible cause of the patient's problem?
- Why should the patient be asked about the medication he's taken?

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**Doctor:** What type of work do you do?

**Client:** I'm an automobile repair mechanic.

**Doctor:** Do you drink? Do you smoke? Do you use illegal drugs?

**Client:** Yes, I drink a bottle of beer every night and I smoke one pack of cigarette daily but I don't use illegal drugs.

**Doctor:** What is your diet like? Do you eat well?

**Client:** I eat a balanced-diet. I also practice a low salt- low-fat diet.

**Doctor:** Do you exercise?

**Client:** No, I don't have time to exercise.

**Doctor:** Now I'm going to ask about your sexual life. Is it okay with you?

**Client:** Yes doctor.

**Doctor:** Thank you. Are you sexually active? If so, how many partners do you have? Do you use any protection?

**Client:** Yes I'm sexually active but only to my wife and we use condom as protection.

**Doctor:** Did you ever have STD's?

**Client:** No.

**Doctor:** Thank you for answering all these questions. Mr. Worthy, from what I've got so far, I think you have inflammation in the tendons of your right elbow; which we call tennis elbow. Repetitive activities could strain your muscle and tendons. This means the structure in there gets too much friction causing this problem. This is not a serious problem but you need some rest on that elbow joint. Even though chances are low, there is still possibility of fracture too. So I'll run some tests like X-ray or more precise test later. In the meantime, I'll give you some pain-killers. That will help you ease your pain. Do you have question?

**Client:** Oh yes can you write a medical note for me stating that I have to rest from work for the meantime?

**Doctor:** Sure. The nurse outside of this room will help you to make the next appointment with me. I'll be able to talk with you better about the diagnosis once I get the result. I hope you feel better soon. It was very nice meeting you Mr. Worthy. See you next time.

**Client:** Thank you doctor. Bye.

## Test Your Knowledge

- Basing from the assessment above, what would be your differential diagnosis?
- What would be your advice to this patient?