Presentation of the HIV+ patient with respiratory symptoms

Presenter
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Presenter
Last Updated: Date
Learning Objectives

• To understand triage as assessment of patients in order to determine the immediacy of care

• To state and implement appropriate triage procedures for the HIV+ patient presenting with respiratory symptoms

• To implement appropriate assessment tools for the HIV+ patient presenting with respiratory symptoms

• To report to medical providers the information necessary to assess immediacy and appropriate level of care for the HIV+ patient presenting with respiratory symptoms
Hypothetical Patient Case

49 year old HIV+ male comes to clinic complaining of difficulty breathing and chest congestion.

* Not an actual patient
Communication

- **Attitude** - Greet the patient in a respectful but confidential manner, such as using first name only in the waiting room. Identify yourself.
- **Environment** – Conduct interview/assessment in a private setting
- **Eye contact** – Engage the patient with your full attention
- **Body language** – Convey relaxed, concerned presence; be open to whatever info the patient provides (keep your arms open, not crossed; focus on the patient and listen to his/her story)

A non-judgmental approach is essential when providing health care. Take care not to express shock, surprise, indignation or laughter at anything the patient says while telling his/her story.
Nursing Exam Checklist

- Confirm patient’s chief complaint
- Onset – when did it start?
- Severity – how mild or severe are the symptoms?
- What makes it better?
- What makes it worse?
- Have you sought care for this problem before? If yes, with whom, where, diagnosis, interventions. How did you feel after the intervention?
- Are you better or worse now?
- Did you get a flu shot this year?
- Where do you live and with whom do you live?
Triage Tools – Vital Signs, Walking Sat, Observation

• Vital Signs
  - T, R, P, BP, oxygen sats resting and with exertion*

• How does the pt respond when you do a walking sat?
  - Increased RR?
  - Can the patient keep up with you?
  - Is s/he winded?
  - Get patients to talk as fast as they can.

• How does the patient appear to you?
## Triage Tools – Sample Triage Form for Nurses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPIRATORY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denies symptoms / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough: YES / NO / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath: YES / NO / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty breathing: YES / NO / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sputum production: YES / NO / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma: YES / NO / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheezing: YES / NO / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoker: Person / Place / Time / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fever: YES / NO / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight gain: YES / NO / OTHER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Triage Tools – Medical Chart (if available)

- Most recent CD4 and HIV VL
- Medications
  - Are you taking meds for HIV? Have you missed any doses of your HIV meds or prophylactic meds in the last month? If so, how many? How often do you take your HIV meds, once a day or twice a day? Check to see if the patient is on PCP and MAC prophylaxis? If not, should he be? Do you use an inhaler? Have you ever used an inhaler?
- Tobacco use
  - Do you smoke? If so, how often? How much per day?
- Problem list
- Review the last chart note if possible
- Review immunization history
  - Examples: flu shot and PPV
Possible Actions

• Hypothetical Patient Scenario
  - Send home?
  - Schedule appt? When?
  - Visit emergency room?
  - Brief provider(s)

* Not an actual patient
Systematic Approach to Triage

- Hypothetical Patient Scenario
  - Vital signs
  - General observations
  - Information gleaned from chart
  - Patient history
  - Information gleaned from interaction
  - Medication list
  - Problem list
  - Information from previous chart note

* Not an actual patient
Proposed Actions

- Hypothetical Patient Scenario
  - Same day appointment
  - Briefing physician
  - Further labs & tests
  - Final disposition

* Not an actual patient
Follow-up Questions

• I don’t have access to a fancy EMR system, how might I develop a paper checklist or template for use in my clinic?

• How do you probe for missing information if I don’t have access to previous medical records? What do I prioritize?

• How do you transition between rapport building and information seeking?

* Not an actual patient