



NORTHWEST AIDS EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENTER

Impact of Torture on Medical Care: Part 1

Nicole Chow Ahrenholz, MD

Attending Physician, International Medicine Clinic at Harborview Medical Center

Clinic Instructor of Medicine, University of Washington

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Case: Ms. M

48-year-old Oromo-speaking woman

- Insomnia
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Chronic pain all over her body, worse in the lower back



Photo:[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ethiopia_in_Africa_\(-mini_map_rivers\).svg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ethiopia_in_Africa_(-mini_map_rivers).svg)

Case: Ms. M

- CBC with diff normal
- CMP normal
- HBVsAg -, HBVsAb+, HBVcAb+
- HCV –
- RPR –
- Schistosomiasis –
- Strongyloides -
- HIV+

Additional History

- Female genital cutting at age 9
- Spent 10 years in a refugee camp
 - Beaten, lost consciousness for several hours
 - Cut with a knife
 - Raped

Overview

- Part 1
 - What is torture?
 - How is it relevant to current issues?
- Part 2
 - How do you use the information?
 - What resources are available?

What is Torture?

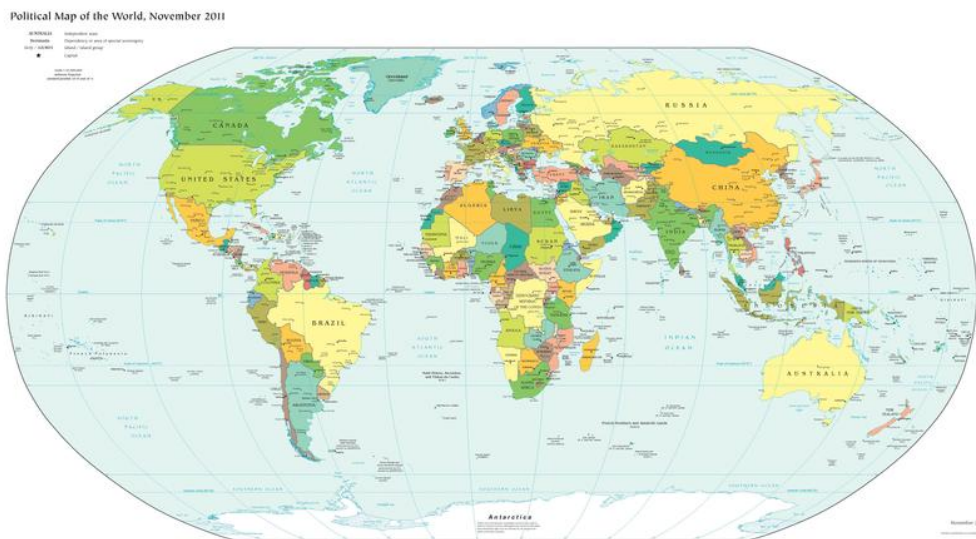
World Medical Association Declaration of Tokyo (1975)

- Deliberate
- Physical OR mental suffering
- By an authority figure
- Not limited to interrogation



Background

- Nearly half of the world's 200 nations practice torture
- 6-12% of immigrants from those countries
- 20-40% of asylum-seekers
- ~500,000 torture survivors in the US



Parallels

- Human trafficking
- Rape
- Victims of gang violence
- Veterans
- Other trauma

Common Methods of Torture

- Beatings
- Burns
- Asphyxiation, waterboarding
- Detention
- Forced postures
- Sexual torture
- Mental torture



Photo: <http://pages.citebite.com/r1c3d7t019>

High-risk populations

- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Scarring
- Unexplained physical symptoms
- Psychiatric symptoms of trauma



Photo: <http://www.ingeniouspress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/syrian-refugee-camp.jpg>

How is it relevant?

Non-adherence

“When I came to the United States in the early 1980s, my nightmares got worse . . . The hospital setting brought back bad memories, and it was difficult to tell people what had really gone wrong with me. The doctors never asked questions about the source of my nightmares but gave me medication anyway . . . Eventually, I did not take the medications prescribed.”

- Richard Oketch, torture survivor from Uganda

Chronic and “non-anatomic” pain

- 78% report chronic pain of multiple areas
 - Headache
 - Back pain
- Physical connections created by specific torture experiences

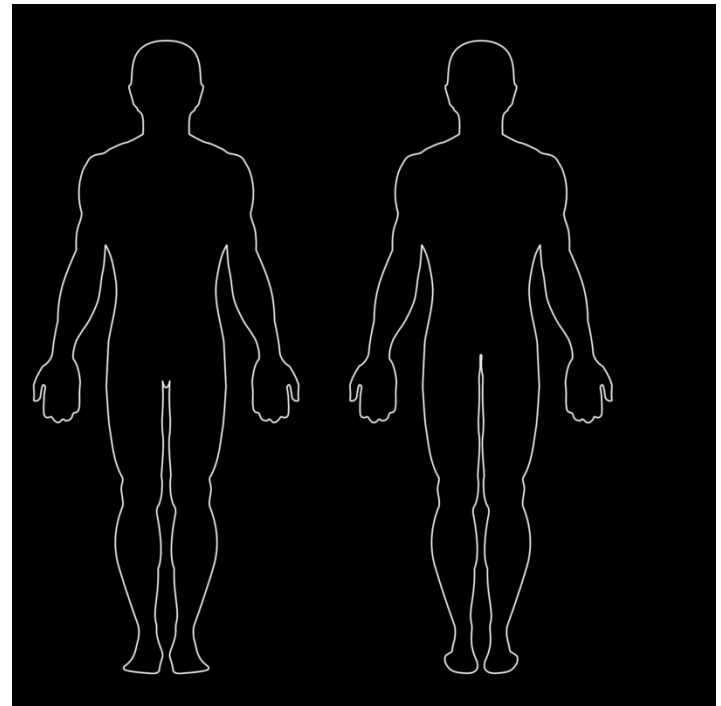
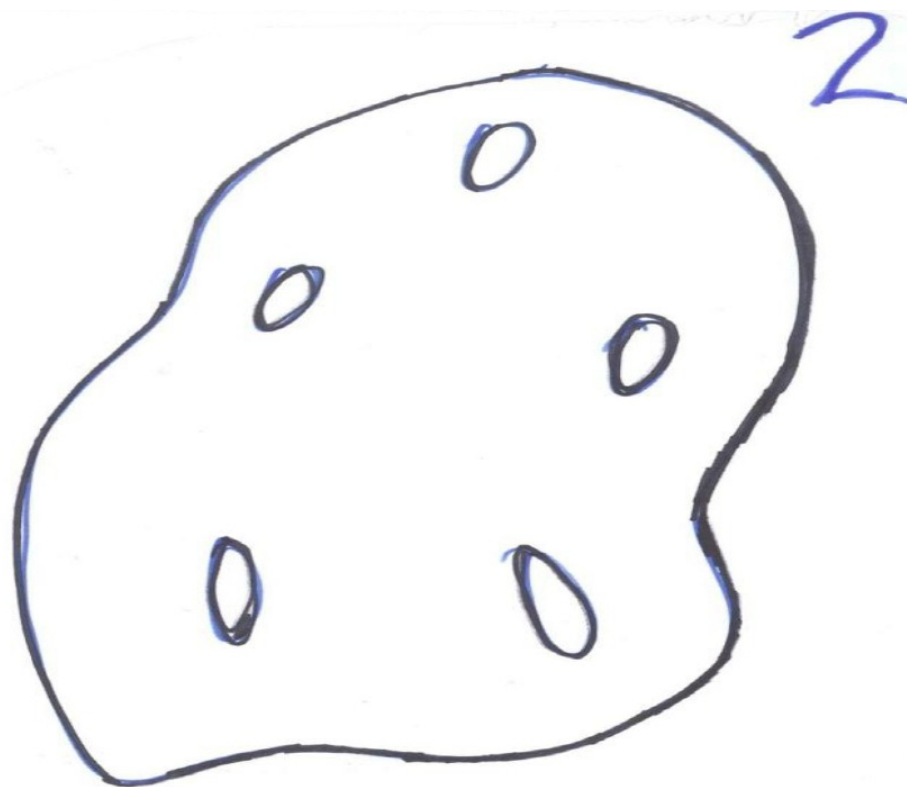
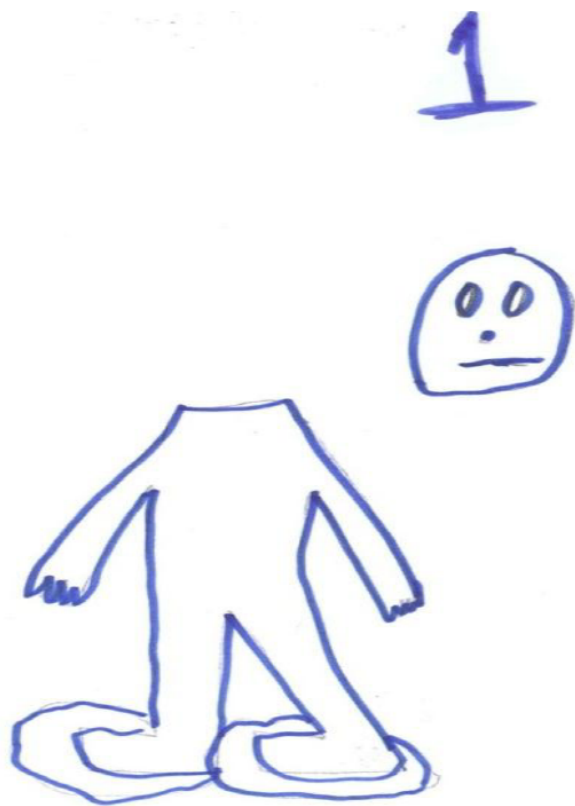


Photo: <http://medicalanatomy.net/wp-content/uploads/human-body-outline-for-kids-60.jpg>

Diminished Body Awareness



Re-traumatization

- Procedures
- Administration of drugs
- Supervision or performing of torture by physicians



Photo: http://en.minghui.org/emh/article_images/2005-2-26-shouguang7.jpg

Comorbid disorders

- Depression
- PTSD
- Substance abuse
- Domestic violence

Next week:
How to use the information
Resources

References

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