

New Station 5

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- You will be asked to see two patients at this station. The clinical information about one of these patients is given in the box below. You should have a second sheet giving you information about the other patient.
- You have 10 minutes with each patient. The examiners will alert you when 6 minutes have elapsed and will stop you after 8 minutes.
- In the remaining 2 minutes, one examiner will ask you to report abnormal physical signs (if any), your diagnosis or differential diagnosis, and your plan for management (if not already clear from your discussion with the patient).

Your role: You are the medical doctor on call.

Patient name: Mrs Anne Walker – aged 38 years

This 38 year old lady complains of pain in her left calf and she feels it may be swollen.

Your task is to assess the patient's problems and address any questions or concerns raised by the patient.

- You should assess the problem by means of a relevant clinical history and a relevant physical examination. You do not need to complete the history before carrying out appropriate examination.
- You should respond to any questions the patient may have, advise the patient of your probable diagnosis (or differential diagnoses) and your plan for investigation and treatment where appropriate.
- You have 8 minutes to complete the task.

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INFORMATION FOR PATIENT

The doctors sitting the examination have been asked to assess your problem. They will have 8 minutes to ask you about the problem and any other relevant issues. They will also examine you. They should explain to you what they think is wrong and what action should be taken and answer any questions you have, for example about the diagnosis, tests that may be needed, or treatment. One of the examiners will ask them to describe any abnormal examination findings and give their diagnosis.

Your history is described below.

You are: Mrs Anne Walker – aged 38 years

Your problem: discomfort and possible swelling in the left calf

You thought your left calf was a little swollen and tight-feeling over the past two days and today it is quite painful when you walk.

You went on holiday to Egypt three weeks ago and you returned home one week ago. Your left calf has been slightly uncomfortable the whole time you were away – noticed from the day after arriving in Egypt. You thought it was probably due to the heat although you were surprised that only one leg was affected. Now, since coming home, the problem has not eased but has got worse.

You tend to have mild discomfort in the left knee from a cartilage injury when you played tennis some years ago. You do not have any other joint problems. You are not aware of any problem with the veins in your legs. You do not feel breathless nor do you have any chest pain. You can answer “no” to any other symptoms or problems you may be asked about.

Your only treatment is the oral contraceptive pill.

You have 3 children – aged 12, 10, and 7. They stayed with your mother when you went on holiday with your husband this time. You smoke 15 cigarettes per day. You work as a secretary.

You should ask the candidate the candidate what might be wrong with your leg. You are worried about a clot – might that be the problem? What should be done to sort this out?

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INFORMATION FOR EXAMINERS

Patient: Mrs Anne Walker – aged 38 years

Examiners should discuss and agree the criteria for pass and for fail in the competencies being assessed.

As a general guide, candidates would be expected to

- Obtain a detailed history – including any contraindications to anticoagulation
- Appreciate that DVT requires to be excluded.
- Examine the calves.
- Explain the need for venous Doppler studies and start heparin pending the result.

The lead examiner should:

- a) Advise the candidate after 6 minutes have elapsed that “You have two minutes remaining with your patient”
- b) Ask the candidate to describe any abnormal physical findings that have been identified
- c) Ask the candidate to give the preferred diagnosis and any differential diagnosis that is being considered
- d) Any remaining areas of uncertainty eg regarding the plan for investigation or management of the problem may be addressed in any time that remains.