

Why Am I Always So Tired?

A Provider-Patient Simulation

by

Kari Brossard Stoops¹, Chelsea Doig², Melissa Gilroy³, Maura Benner²,
and Michael Caruso⁴

¹ Assistant Professor, Ithaca College, School of Health Sciences and Human Performance, Department of Health Promotion and Physical Education, Ithaca, NY.

² Undergraduate Student, Ithaca College, School of Health Sciences and Human Performance, Department of Health Promotion and Physical Education, Ithaca, NY.

³ Assistant Professor, DeSales University, Physician Assistant Program, Center Valley, PA.

⁴ Undergraduate Student, Ithaca College, School of Health Sciences and Human Performance, Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences, Ithaca, NY.



Part I – The Initial Visit

In this activity you will be paired with another student and will act as primary care providers. Your instructor will simulate a patient, “Emma,” a 21-year-old female who presents to her primary care office after months of fatigue and malaise. You will be given an initial patient intake form to review containing basic medical and social history. Your role will be to use your knowledge of both disease and clinical assessment questions to assess the patient. The goal of the activity is to practice your investigative, listening, and diagnostic skills to determine which laboratory tests to conduct and to formulate a diagnosis.

Similar to most primary care providers, your time with this patient will be limited. You will have 12 minutes to interview your patient to gather a patient history, subjective data, and note physical observations. You must acquire all relevant information during this time. Record your clinical observations and notes. After the 12-minute interview you will have an additional five minutes to review your notes, determine which laboratory tests you would like to order for your patient, and formulate your top four possible diagnoses. At the end of the five-minute period you will write your name, diagnostic test requests, and top four possible diagnoses on a sheet of paper to turn in to the instructor.

Part II – The Follow-Up

After your initial assessment you receive clinical and laboratory results for your patient. You will have five minutes to review these results below. After review, you will have 12 minutes to revisit with your patient to ask additional questions. At the end of these 12 minutes, you will then have two more minutes to determine your top two possible diagnoses, write them on a separate sheet of paper with your name and turn it in to your instructor.

Emma's Results

<i>HR</i>	<i>BP</i>	<i>RR</i>	<i>Temperature</i>	<i>O₂ Saturation</i>
72	130/85	16	100.3 °F	99%

Height: 64 in

Weight: 125 lbs

<i>Test</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Reference Range</i>
Sodium	128	133–145 mmol/L
Potassium	3.8	3.5–5.0 mmol/L
Chloride	98.6	101–111 mmol/L
Glucose	78	70–100 mg/dL
Blood Urea Nitrogen	17.3	6–24 mg/dL
Creatinine	0.8	0.51–0.95 mg/dL
Thyroid Stimulating Hormone	1.52	0.34–5.60 MCIU/uL
Total T3	1.10	0.87–1.78 ng/uL
Free T4	0.92	0.61–1.12 ng/dL
Vitamin B12	651	180–914 pg/mL
C-RP	6.8	< 5.00 mg/L
White Blood Cell Count	4.4	4.3–11.6 × 10 ³ /uL
Hematocrit	37	37–49%
Hemoglobin	12.3	12.3–16.2 g/dL
Red Blood Cell Count	4.0	4.2–5.6 million/mm ³
MCV	85	82–97 um ³
MCHC	34	32–36 g/dL
Anti-nuclear Antibody	Positive	

Urinalysis:

- Presence of white blood cells
- Trace of red blood cells

Homework Assignment

- (A) Write a one-page diagnostic report summarizing all gathered data including an analysis of laboratory results. You must also include a final diagnosis for your patient. Write an additional paragraph describing the mechanism of pathology of your diagnosis.
- (B) Create your own patient simulation case choosing any disease or medical issue within the scope of material taught in this course. Prepare a one-page document describing the disease you have chosen and how you intend to act it out for the next class period. Prepare an additional separate document that contains simulated lab results appropriate for the disease selected. All documents are due at the following class period.

Part III – More Practice

In pairs, perform a role simulation using the case studies you and your classmates have designed. One partner acts as a provider interviewing the other partner who acts as a patient with their chosen condition. Apply the approach you used already in Parts I and II of this case study and document any information you gather. Each student has 12 minutes to act out their patient simulation or act as a provider. After 12 minutes, the patient shows the provider the document containing any laboratory or diagnostic test results. After an additional six minutes of review, the provider formulates their partner's top two possible diagnoses, records them on a sheet of paper with their name, and the name of their "patient" and turns it in to the instructor. Then switch roles with your partner and act as the opposite role for an additional 12 minutes repeating the process.