

Common problems encountered
in primary care II.

(cough, runny nose, sore throat,
sputum, tiredness, anxiety,
insomnia, headache, neck pain,
limb cramps.)

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Cough and Sputum

- Time of onset, period of symptoms, happening every year, day or night time, trigger events, sputum production: yellow, green, blood stain; associated conditions: chest pain, wheeze, fever, chills, weight loss. Travel history, the seasonal(季節性) and regional (地區性)epidemiology(流行病).

Cough and Sputum

- Differential diagnoses: simple viral cough, bronchitis, pneumonia, allergy cough, asthma, Tuberculosis(Hong Kong , Macau , China) acid reflux , foreign body in child, lung cancer.

Cough and Sputum

- Investigations: observe, CXR, CT thorax, sputum X culture, cytology, bronchoscopy.
- Treatment: simple medication, antibiotics, nebulised medication, explanation, follow up, refer to specialist.

Runny Nose

- Time, how long, clear (allergy); greenish (infection); blood stained (Nasopharyngeal cancer); facial pain, (sinusitis); trigger events: (cold air), seasonal, used any medication before, (nasal spray), oral medication, environmental condition and modification.

Runny Nose

- Differential diagnoses: allergy rhinitis, simple viral flu, sinusitis, cancer. (NPC, 鼻咽癌)

Runny Nose

- Usually no investigation: if necessary: XR sinus, CT sinus, ENT surgeon for endoscopy, blood tests of allergy panel.

Runny Nose

- Treatment: simple antihistamine, (side effect of pseudoephedrine, palpitation, poor sleep, elderly with urinary retention); singulair(善古寧); Nasal spray with mild steroid; sea-water saline for wash , humidifier, wear mask, air-filter, avoid cold air, cats, dogs, dust.

Sore throat

- Time of symptoms, short time mean infection, long time worried of cancer; fever, chills indicated infection; change in voice, the bacteria get into the vocal cord. Any exudate change, indicate infection. Any ulcer, whether aphous ulcer or hand foot mouth syndrome.

Sore throat

- Treatment: simple symptomatic treatment, lozenges, saline gargles. Start antibiotics for exudative change, fever.

Sore throat

- Most difficult case is multiple ulcers with exudate change, high fever. It is viral infection with secondary bacteria infection.

Sore throat

- Need antiviral drug, antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs for prolonged period of time.

Tiredness, malaise, anxiety, insomnia

- Physical illness or psychological causes.
- Physical(身體上): cardiovascular like, heart failure, ischemic heart disease; liver: chronic hepatitis, liver cirrhosis, liver failure; renal failure; lung: chronic bronchitis, TB infection; anaemia, hypothyroid, cancers of different body parts, from head to toe.

Tiredness, malaise, anxiety, insomnia.

- Obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome(睡眠窒息症): fat, short neck, enlarged tonsils, heavy snoring, stop breathing during sleeping, day time sleepy, poor concentration.

Need to ask the spouse about the condition.

- Inx: sleeps study.
- Tx: CPAP machine,+/- operation to remove tonsils.

Tiredness, malaise, anxiety, insomnia

- Psychological causes(精神上): depression, anxiety, schizophrenia(思覺失調), loss job, loss of love partner. (need to rule out physical illness first.)

Tiredness, malaise, anxiety, insomnia

- Chronic fatigue syndrome(“長期大懶蛇”):
debilitating fatigue, persistent over 6
months,
reduction in activity and no cause found.

Tiredness, malaise, anxiety, insomnia

- Anxiety: worry too much, nervous, sweating, cannot concentrate at work, affecting working ability, panic attack(驚恐症).

Tiredness, malaise, anxiety, insomnia

- Insomnia: too busy, too stressful, frequent traveling, over-night work, gambling.
- Improvement: exercise at day time ,relaxing music quiet environment, warm bath, hot milk, stop thinking 1 hour before sleep. Try mild sleeping pills if necessary, like stilnox. Do not give strong one: dormicum.

Headache, Neck pain

- Time, short or long time, position.
Associated symptoms: dizziness, vertigo, arm and leg weakness, numbness, slurred speech, loss of consciousness, vision, hearing.
Any injury before, fever, level of consciousness, skin rash, any investigations done before. Any treatment given before, what is the treatment effect.

Headache, Neck pain

- Headache: do not miss life --threatening causes, like: stroke, (haemorrhage type, ischemic type), brain tumour , meningitis , pituitary gland tumour (vision), subdural haematoma, tension headache, migraine.
Others: herpes zoster, (rash with blister appears 2 days after headache), ear infection, throat infection, jaw pain.

Headache, Neck pain

- Neck pain: degenerative change of spine, osteophytes, sprain neck muscle, prolapsed discs, cervical myelopathy (disc protruding and press on the nerves, hand and leg weakness, poor motor function.)
- Inx: XR, MRI
- TX: Oral & topical analgesic.
physiotherapy, finally operation.

Limb cramps

- Both legs or one legs, daytime or nighttime, wake up at night, any vascular diseases (peripheral vascular disease, smoking, weakness foot pulses.), blood tests: calcium, sodium and potassium, muscle enzymes.

Limb cramps

- Self treatment: massage, analgesic cream, medication taken, muscle relaxants.