SimPHARM Case Description

SimPHARM™

Case Level: Early Learning
Case Run: Single visit, 48 hours
Patient: Lucy Young

Patient Description:

Introduction to Lucy:

Lucy Young has been admitted to the sleep investigation unit at your hospital where she will undergo a variety of sleep studies, including polysomnography. Lucy lives out of town so will be staying two nights for successive sleep stage scans. Her family will not be joining her.

The medical team would like you to evaluate her blood pressure control during her stay.

Gender: Female

Weight: 139 lbs. / 63 kg

Height: 5′ 4″ / 163 cm

Age: 61

Case Details

Lucy has three concurrent medical conditions. Essential hypertension, gastroesophageal reflux disease and sleep disturbances. A severe episode of GORD occurs within the first hour of the case which may also present with some wheezing and asthma-like symptoms. All medical conditions are unrelated in this case. In about half the times that the case is run, Lucy will develop a moderate tension headache that will require some care.

Pathologies:

Condition	Severity	Occurrence	Duration	Probability
Hypertension	Mild-Moderate	Pre-existing	Ongoing	100%
Gastroesophageal reflux	Moderate-severe	Day 1: within the first 30 minutes	Self-limiting	100%
Tension headache	Moderate	Day 1: 6-8 hours	Self-limiting	50%

Pre-existing Medication:

Lucy has no pre-existing prescriptions. She self-medicates with an antacid when required for reflux symptoms.

Availability of drugs and laboratory investigations:

All drugs and investigations are available for students.

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Student Activities:

Students are expected to help alleviate any acute symptoms that Lucy may present with and if appropriate institute long term preventative care for these. The student should also treat any long term underlying conditions.

Educational Summary

Although this is an early learning case there are several issues that students need to deal with:

1. Case busyness.
2. Understanding conditions.
3. Finding personal time to attend to the purpose of the case.

All conditions are independent, which makes the case complexity low. The main purpose for the student is to treat the hypertension. This is a silent condition and therefore is not one that will be obvious to the student when working with Lucy. The GORD symptoms are quite severe and evident in the case reporting which means that this will seem to take precedence over the more chronic condition. It is not uncommon for students to either loose site of what they are trying to achieve or over-treat a condition.

Learning Objectives:

Learning objectives for the student:

1. To identify goals for each condition that arises.
2. To prioritise what he/she can achieve for the given time frame of the case.
3. To not attempt to do too many things in a single situation, maintain self awareness of cognitive load.
4. To develop skills to quickly improve his/her condition knowledge.
5. To understand how to unpack cases using therapeutic decision making processes and to arrive at justifiable treatment choices.
6. To understand the time course of drug effects (how rapidly they work and how long they work for).
7. To reflect on their approach to their approach to the case.
    a. How does an acute (non-life threatening but severe) event change their thinking about other conditions?
    b. What mechanisms did they develop or will they need to develop to deal with combinations of acute and chronic issues.

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Teaching Activities:

Students are expected to help alleviate any acute symptoms that Lucy may present with and if appropriate institute long term preventative care for these. The student should also treat any long term underlying conditions.

Debriefing Plan:

Part 1:

Setting: As a group.

Purpose: To normalize experiences and help establish principles of norm-referencing.

Activity: Students discuss what happened during their case.

- What events happened?
- When did they happen?
- What symptoms may have occurred? (note that not all episodes of a condition will yield the same symptom profile).
- Did any side effects occur? Some students, by chance, may have seen a rare side effect and when they realize they were the only person in the group who saw this they can start to contextualize and normalize their experience.

Part 2:

Setting: Round table – each student individually.

Purpose: To be able to justify a clinical decision to their peers.

Activity: Each student should choose one decision that they worked up and explain.

- Background information they looked for.
- Their goals in relation to the Lucy's goals.
- Their treatment choice and why?
- What happened?

Assessment Criteria:

The student:

- Took a reasonable patient history.
- Worked up the patient in terms of relevant observations and lab tests.
- Set patient relevant goals for treatment of hypertension.
- Initiated an antihypertensive with justification of choice.
- Determined, within the 48 hour time frame, whether their choice was reasonable.
- Managed the GORD and any associated symptoms.
- Managed any other symptoms (e.g. tension headache that may have occurred).