HISTORY TAKING

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General Outline

• Obtain a detailed history of the pertinent and necessary information regarding the patient presentation

• Provide an accurate description of the relevant symptoms and events in the presenting illness and relate symptoms of other systems to the patient presentation
• Interpret the information obtained in terms of a disorder of the function and structure and then in terms of pathology.

• Present the patient history and generate a problem list or differential diagnosis

• Summarize the history emphasizing the most relevant points
General Guidelines

• Introduce yourself to the patient

• Be friendly

• Start by talking about impersonal matters

• Do not give impression of hurriedness
• Address the patient by his/her name

• Put the patient at ease

• Give the patient chance to express himself

• Be ready to interrupt the patient whenever desirable but in a tactful manner
• Be careful about medical terms used by patients

• Patients may exaggerate, suppress, or fake symptoms according to their personality

• Questions should be clear and simple

• Avoid leading questions or suggesting symptoms or answers to patients
• Analyze symptoms thoroughly and in chronological order

• Write notes while the patient is talking

• If the patient is too sick give him a rest and complete later

• In certain diseases history from eye witness or family member is very important
Content of The History “profile”

• History source
• Date
• Name, age, sex, marital status, occupation, address
• Admission date
• Referral (outpatient, casualty, referring hospital…)
• Chronic illnesses
Content of The History
“chief complaint”

• The complaint that brought patient to hospital
• Usually one
• Should be in patient’s own words

+duration prior to admission
Content of The History “history of present illness”

• Thorough analysis of chief complaint
• Associated symptoms

All in chronological manner
Content of The History
“analysis of symptom”

• onset
• Duration
• Site
• Severity
• Radiation
• aggravating and relieving factors

Significant negatives has to be mentioned
Content of The History
“review of systems”

• the presence or absence of cardinal symptoms in all other systems which are probably not related to the present illness.

• Always start by mentioning the positives first
Content of The History “past history”

- Childhood illnesses and immunization
- Operations and injuries
- Previous hospitalization
- Allergies including drug and food
- Blood transfusion
- Travel abroad
- Common medical problems such as diabetes mellitus and hypertension
Content of The History
“Drug history”

• Name
• Dose
• duration of usage
Content of The History
“family history”

• First degree relatives (father, mother, siblings, children)

• Second degree relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins)

• History of diabetes mellitus, hypertension, ischaemic heart disease, kidney diseases, cancers etc.

• Family pedigree
Content of The History
“social history”

• Housing
• Income
• Occupation
• Personal interests, hobbies, and animal contact
• Smoking
• Alcohol
Content of The History
“psychological history”

• Personality

• Emotional reactions

• Traumatic events (bereavement and separation)

• Anxieties regarding financial, occupational, sexual, or religious matters