

Clinical Reasoning Scenario 3

Clinical Reasoning Activity

From the case presentation note down your differential Diagnosis and the indicators that Anna has:

Anna warrants investigation for Sjogren's Syndrome.

- Muscle aching (myalgia) and fatigue with possible hand and foot joint aching (arthralgia)
- Females carry a far higher risk of developing Sjogren's Syndrome
- Dry eyes and dry mouth are characteristic of Sjogren's Syndrome
- A family history of inflammatory arthropathy
- Peak age of onset is 40-60

Next Steps

Explain to Anna that her symptoms warrant further specialist investigation. The dry eyes, dry mouth, fatigue and aching may all be related to the one condition.

Her Mother having RA slightly increases her risk of developing an inflammatory condition.

Discuss pacing strategies that may help her to manage her fatigue symptoms during the day. Encourage her to maintain her activity levels as much as possible as this will be beneficial in the longer term and mitigate any loss of fitness levels.

Investigations

If you are confident performing a Schirmer's test then this can provide an objective measure of eye dryness in clinic.

Onwards Referral

Refer to Rheumatology for further investigations and commencement of appropriate treatment as necessary.

Learning Points.

Musculoskeletal symptoms of Sjogrens syndrome are often vague and diffuse

It is key to ask about fatigue levels and possible causes

Ensuring in-depth questioning about eye, mouth and vaginal secretions are a vital component of recognising a potential case

Sjogrens syndrome is far more common in women than men (approx. 9:1 ratio)