

PATIENT DETAILS

Age	25 yrs
Name	Henryk Penderson
Presenting complaint	Excessive tiredness for around 6 months (low mood / anxiety — depression / anxiety)
Opening statement	“I have been feeling excessively tired. I wondered if I had a virus?”

FACILITATOR NOTES

The aim of this Sim is for students to undertake a relatively simple history that points to a potential diagnosis of depression / anxiety. The student should wrap the consultation up with a plan for the initial management of this patient and they should communicate this with the patient. It is hoped that this management plan will align with current NICE guidelines alongside a consideration of the patient's concerns, presentation and family history.

If the students would like to utilise the PHQ 9 or GAD within their consultation then they should be provided with a copy of this, but **only if asked for**. If the student does not ask for this during the initial consult then this should be brought up in the post consult discussion, if there is time allow the student to return to the patient to ask the direct questions – this allows you to then discuss the score and the student's management plan.

This also allows for a discussion on scoring tools and their utility (or not) within primary care.

- [Clinical scores in primary care](#) | [British Journal of General Practice \(bjgp.org\)](#)
- [Depression](#) | [Health topics A to Z](#) | [CKS](#) | [NICE](#)
- [Generalized anxiety disorder](#) | [Health topics A to Z](#) | [CKS](#) | [NICE](#)
- [Tiredness/fatigue in adults](#) | [Health topics A to Z](#) | [CKS](#) | [NICE](#)

RESPONSE TO FURTHER OPEN QUESTIONS

You have noticed that you have been more tired than usual for the last **6 months** or so. You struggle to feel refreshed, even after a good night's sleep. It's now starting to affect your work and studies – you struggle to maintain concentration for anything longer than about half an hour. You've tried cutting down on caffeine and although you feel less jittery, it hasn't really helped much else.

INFORMATION ON DIRECT QUESTIONING

Only divulge the following if you are asked directly:

- You noticed that the tiredness seemed to start around the same time that you broke up with your partner. It was also a particularly stressful time at university with lots of exams and coursework deadlines.
- You are feeling very stressed all the time and find yourself worrying about 'anything and everything'. You have not really been a 'worrier' until recently (over the last few months). When feeling worried and stressed you feel tension in your shoulders, stomach and legs and sometimes it feels like your heart is racing and your breathing gets faster. You can't think of anything in particular that triggers these episodes but they have been happening more often over the last few months.
- Your sleep is quite poor. It takes you hours to get off and when you do get there it is often broken. Sometimes you give up around 4-5am and go for a walk along the canal to try and clear your head.
- Your appetite has also suffered; sometimes you forget to eat, sometimes you're just not hungry. You don't think you've lost a significant amount of weight, but perhaps a couple of kilograms.
- You are **not suicidal** and have not had any deliberate self-harm. You occasionally wonder if anyone would miss you if you were no longer around but you have no plans to harm yourself.
- You have developed regular headaches, around 2-3 a week, which is not something that you've had before. They are generalized and achy, sometimes worse around the sides and tend to occur towards the end of the day. Sometimes you feel a bit sick but there has been no vomiting or visual changes and lying down can help. Paracetamol seems ineffective but you still take them anyway.
- Your bowel habit is a bit variable, but this has not really worried you, as they have never been completely regular. There has been no rectal bleeding or abdominal pain.
- Your breathing and urination are fine.
- They should ask you about what you think is going on – if the student / doctor does not acknowledge your ideas and does not address this concern in their explanation you will ask them again if this could have been caused by a virus.

PAST MEDICAL HISTORY

- Fracture of arm age 7 years
- Tonsillectomy age 10 years

DRUGS & ALLERGIES

Medication: nil regular. Paracetamol for headaches. No known drug allergies.

FAMILY HISTORY

- Mother – hypothyroidism (low thyroid hormone levels)
- Dad – hypertension (high blood pressure), obstructive sleep apnoea

SOCIAL HISTORY

Single, bisexual, no children.

Occupation: Student architect and bar work.

Type of housing: Lives on a barge. You try to live eco-friendly and cannot afford “normal” housing rent. You like the freedom it offers and find the water helps you to be your most creative.

Support system: Limited. Parents / family live in Norway. A few friends from the course but busy course and having to work to fund the bills so limited social time. Has a cousin who lives in London.

Smoking: Never.

Alcohol: Occasional beer in the week, 1 bottle of wine over the weekend (15–20 units/week).

IMPORTANT SOCIAL, CULTURAL OR BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PATIENT

You are comfortable with your sexuality, your parents were a little surprised when you “came out” but they have been largely supportive and you have never been a recipient of any bullying / hate crimes.

The break-up with your girlfriend was inevitable given how busy and therefore detached you were. This upset you and you do blame yourself for it. You are still in some contact but she has moved onto a new relationship. You have felt too tired to pursue dating currently.

HOW TO RESPOND TO EMOTIONAL SUBJECTS AND QUESTIONS

Ideas: You think this has all been triggered by a virus.

Concerns: You worry that it’s affecting your work, you need your job to support your studies. You also worry that it may affect your course grades.

Expectations: You expect that the GP will organise some blood tests to diagnose a virus.

Feelings: You are a bit fed up of feeling this way, worried for your future and hopeful that getting a diagnosis might help you to recover and start feeling back to normal. You are worried about these increasing episodes of worry and find them overwhelming at times.

DEMEANOUR

You come across as surprised if depression / anxiety / psychological causes are suggested, however you are not offended or defensive and accept the student / GP’s opinion.

When talking about the episodes of worry / stress and your racing heart rate and breathing you become more visibly on edge and anxious. If this is acknowledged sensitively by the doctor / student you are easy to calm and get back on track with their questions. If not acknowledged then this continues and escalates.

IF THE STUDENT ASKS DIRECT QUESTIONS — YOUR MARKED ANSWERS

Your answers are marked with a red circle ○

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?	Not at all	Several Days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
5. Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling bad about yourself – or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down	0	1	2	3
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television	0	1	2	3
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed. Or the opposite – being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual	0	1	2	3
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or of hurting yourself in some way	0	1	2	3

Total Score: 1-4 Minimal depression; 5-9 Mild depression; 10-14 Moderate depression; 15-19 Moderately severe depression; 20-27 Severe depression

PHQ-9 — actor's answers

Over the <u>last 2 weeks</u> , how often have you been bothered by the following problems? (Use "✓" to indicate your answer)	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge	0	1	2	3
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
3. Worrying too much about different things	0	1	2	3
4. Trouble relaxing	0	1	2	3
5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still	0	1	2	3
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	0	1	2	3

(For office coding: Total Score T ____ = ____ + ____ + ____)

GAD-7 — actor's answers

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Patient name	H Pedersen
BP	126/70
Pulse	76, regular
Weight	66 kg
Height	180 cm
Chest / abdo / cardio	Exam normal

PATIENT RECORD (TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENT)

Name	H Pedersen
Age	25 years

PAST MEDICAL HISTORY

- Greenstick fracture of humerus age 7 years
- Tonsillectomy age 10 years

LAST 3 CONSULTATIONS

- **February 2020** – Upper respiratory tract infection, delayed script for amoxicillin, supportive advice.
- **December 2019** – Sore throat, likely viral, supportive advice / reassured.
- **April 2018** – Testicular pain. Suspected epididymo-orchitis. Treated with ciprofloxacin and advised to see GUM for a full STI screen.

MEDICATION

Nil regular. No known drug allergies.

PATIENT HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE-9 (PHQ-9)

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?
(Use "✓" to indicate your answer)

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
5. Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down	0	1	2	3
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television	0	1	2	3
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual	0	1	2	3
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way	0	1	2	3

PHQ-9 — blank copy

GAD-7

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?
(Use "✓" to indicate your answer)

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge	0	1	2	3
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
3. Worrying too much about different things	0	1	2	3
4. Trouble relaxing	0	1	2	3
5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still	0	1	2	3
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	0	1	2	3

GAD-7 — blank copy