



Case Discussion Questions

Below is a list of questions that can be used in a Case Discussion in order to elicit critical thinking, model expert thought processes and to help students make connections across cases, as well as identify areas where they can improve their approach to cases. The document is organized into sections based on the elements of a case - not all will be used in a single discussion, but are provided as options that can be selected based on the situation.

Present case overview - presentation, history, physical

- What is significant in all of the information you have [history & physical, labs, etc], and why?
- What labs would you like to order?
- What would be the most useful lab to order?
- What key facts should be considered?
- What are some underlying assumptions?
- What bodily system might a clinician want to focus on in light of these symptoms?
- What [muscle/tendon/nerve/cranial nerve] is most likely involved/injured?
- What additional information do you need? How would you get it?
- What clinical features of this case are particularly suggestive of ... ?
- What is the most likely mechanism of ... ?

Pathology

- This is an example of xxxx. Why does the affected organ appear to be zzzz ?
- What is the nature of [the abnormality] of the affected organ?
- What are the major features of the pathology shown in the low power image? Describe.
- What is the predominate cell type shown in the high power image of the tissue?
- What are the major steps of the inflammatory response that result in the accumulation of these cells within tissue?
- What type of necrosis and exudate is seen in the lesion?
- What type of cell and what cellular function predominates in the center of this lesion? Describe.
- What specific features define the lesion seen here as ... ?
- What cell types are increased in number in the recent wound?
- What do you think might be the potential outcome(s) of this pathology if left untreated? Explain your reasoning.

Lab results

- What do you see here that's interesting?
- What additional tests would you do?
- What would you expect to see in the [scan, film, x-ray, US]?
- What is the most likely cause of her/his symptoms/test results/situation?

Case Discussion Questions, cont.

Narrow diagnosis

- What is the MOST LIKELY underlying diagnosis? Why?
- Why are others less likely?
- What other diagnoses might be considered? Did anyone have a close second choice?

Show additional information (imaging, more labs, slides, etc)

- Narrow diagnosis
- Is the diagnosis definitive? Why or why not?
- What additional information do you need? How would you get it?

Prompt critical thinking

Questions should prompt interpretation, analysis, inference, evaluation, explanation

- What is the significance of?
- What is the association between....?
- What is the natural history of...?
- What is the pathophysiology of?
- What is the pathophysiological role of the [zzz] in the present situation?
- Why is [xxx] important?
- What are the implications?
- What would make this answer correct?
- What are some alternatives we haven't yet explored?
- How confident can we be in our conclusion, given what we now know?
- How would you explain why this particular decision was made?

Management/Treatment

- What are the basic principles of therapy for?
- What other biological factors are helpful/important to consider in managing this disease?
- Which ONE of the following therapies would be most effective in preventing [xxx] complication?
- Which ONE of the following choices would be safest?
- Given his/her most current status and therapeutic regimen, which ONE of the following choices would now be the best therapeutic option?

What-if / Complication / Summary questions

- What are your main takeaways from this case? [Prompt students (NOT facilitator) to summarize key points from cases]
- Change some aspect of the case (age, gender, other demographics, behaviors, symptoms)
 - "What if it was a 82 y/o female?"
 - "What if the person had been travelling overseas?"
- While waiting for surgery, the patient developed aa, bb, cc. What complication is most likely in this case? What are the sequence of events to explain the new clinical findings in this patient?
- Prompt students to reflect on how cases were related

End of session - Transition/Wrap-up

- What, if anything, did you have difficulty with?
- What would you like to know more about? How will you find out?
- Prompt students to consider how they approached each case - was it the same, different? What would they do differently next time?