

History Taking

- Open ended questions

STARTING CONVERSATION

- New Patient
 - Hi I am Dr Roman. How can I help you today?
- Regular Patient
 - Hi Mr X. How is everything!

• HOPI

- Site
- Onset
- Character
- Radiation
- Associated Symptoms
 - Now you can ask about differential diagnosis
- Trigger and timing

WHAT CAUSED IT?

- Did anything significant happened before this which may have caused this?
- Usual triggers in the exam
 - Emotional stress
 - Recent infection
 - Recent travel
 - Started a new medicine
 - Trauma

- Exacerbating and relieving factors
 - In case of pain, ask
 - If they need any pain killers
 - If they are allergic to anything
 - if they have used any medications and if that helped.
- Severity or Impact on life or sleep
 - If the following wake the patient from sleep, then it is a serious condition and unlikely to be psychogenic
 - Pain
 - Itching
 - Cough
 - Urination
 - Shortness of breath
- Red Flags or Complications
- Constitutional Symptoms
 - Fever
 - Loss of weight or appetite
 - Lumps or bumps anywhere in the body
 - Night sweats

 PRACTICE TIPS

Try to think in a head to toe manner. Some common red flags are

- Severe headache
- Fever
- Altered Consciousness
- Altered level of activities
- Visual problems
- Decreased fluid or food intake
- Chest pain or shortness of breathing
- Severe pain anywhere

- Reduced urine output or no urine output
- Constipation or Obstipation
- Swelling of the legs

PRACTICE TIPS

- Close the conversation with further questions and ICE
 - Is there anything else you would like to add?
 - Ok in that case, my understanding is --- summarise the key points and start ICE.
 - Idea
 - Do you have any theories about what could be causing your symptoms?
 - Concerns
 - Are you worried about this being anything in particular?
 - Expectations
 - Are there anything you were expecting to happen today?

- 5P in Women
 - Period
 - When was your last menstrual period?
 - Are your periods regular?
 - What is the usual gap between your two periods?
 - Any PBS between the period?
 - How long does your period last?
 - Any excessive bleeding during the period
 - If yes
 - How frequently do you change your pads?
 - Are they fully soaked?
 - Any soaking of clothes?

- Any large clots?
 - Does it affect your daily routine?
- Any prolonged bleeding or pain during the period?
- When was your first menstrual period?
- If Menopause
 - Any symptoms
 - Any symptoms of menopause
- Pills
 - Are you sexually active
 - What are you doing for avoiding pregnancy?
 - How long have you been using it?
 - Any side effects or problems?
- Partner
 - What kind of relationship are you in?
 - How long have you been in this relationship?
 - Do you know about safe sexual practices or practice safe sex?
 - Have you ever had any unsafe sexual activity? When was it?
 - What is your sexual orientation?
 - What types of sexual activities do you engage in?
 - Any pain during sexual activities?
 - Any bleeding during or after the sexual activities?
 - Have you or your partner (current or past) ever been diagnosed with STIs?
 - Any pain during the intercourse?
 - Any bleeding after the intercourse?
 - How is your relationship with your partner?
 - If patient has casual partners
 - How many sexual partners do you have right now?
 - When did you get into relationship with this partner?
 - What type of sexual activities do you engage in?
- Pregnancy

- Have you ever become pregnant?
- Did all the pregnancies lead to the birth of a baby?
- Any problems during any pregnancies?
- Mode of delivery?
- Breast
 - Any problems or concerns about breast?
 - Any lumps, tenderness, discharge, skin change?
 - Any Pain?
 - Any Warmness?
- Pap
 - When was your last cervical test?
- PID
 - Any pain on the lower tummy or around the private parts?
 - Any itching, discharge or skin change down below?
- Pelvic surgeries

 PAIN, BLEEDING, SPOTTING

Always ask about pain, bleeding and spotting in case of a pregnant woman, between periods, after intercourse and in menopause.

- Sexual history (In Male)
 - Confidentiality statement and normalisation
 - Are you sexually active?
 - What type of relationship are you on?
 - What is your sexual orientation?
 - Will you be comfortable to share with me the types of sexual activities you perform including the route of sex? (MSM)
 - How long have you been in this relationship?
 - If casual relationship or started less than 3 months ago

- How many relationship this year
- Safe sex
- Any partner identified with STI
- Any sex under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs (better to ask this question later)
- Have you or your partner ever been diagnosed with any sexually transmitted infections?
- Any problem during the sexual activities (if relevant)

PREGNANCY HISTORY

In a pregnant patient, ask about pregnancy related questions first and then go through other Ps as you find relevant to the current case. You can always ask about pelvic surgeries and pap smear in all the cases. For other cases, use your clinical judgement.

- **PMH**
 - Common ones (If positive, ask about DISCO)
 - Diabetes
 - High Blood Pressure
 - High Cholesterol
 - Kidney Problems
 - Lung Conditions
 - Taking any medications (prescription, OTC or herbal)
 - Dosage and Frequency
 - Indications
 - Side effects
 - Compliance
 - Others
 - Allergies to anything
 - Hospitalisation

- Immunisation
- **PSH**
 - Common ones
 - Abdominal surgeries
 - Hip or Knee surgeries
 - Previous CS
 - Pelvic surgeries
 - **Past Mental Health Problems**
 - Hospital Admissions
 - Any Medication
 - Any ongoing community based treatment
 - **Screening**
 - Cancer screening
 - FOBT
 - After 50 years
 - HPV
 - After 25 years
 - Mammography
 - after 50 years
 - CVD risk assessment
 - After 45 years
 - **Psychosocial history**
 - **SADMASSSCHOTI**
 - Smoking
 - Alcohol
 - Drugs Diet and Driving
 - Mood
 - Anxiety
 - Sleep
 - Sexuality
 - Suicidality

- Contact
- Home and daily living
 - Who do you live with
 - Any stresses at home
 - How is your relationship with your partner?
- Occupation
 - What do you do for living
 - Any stress at work
 - How do you usually spend your free time
- Travel
 - Travelled recently
 - Any endemic region
 - Where did you stay
 - Any street food
 - Any tattooing
 - Bush walking
 - Any sexual activities
- Immunisation
 - For Adults
 - Tetanus
 - Influenza
 - Covid
 - Pneumococcus
 - Shingles
 - HPV

SCREENING FOR ELDERLY

Remember to ask these 7 questions in elderly

- Any problem with hearing or vision

- Any problem with eating or drinking
- Any problem with memory or mood
- Any problem with walking or balance
- Are you using any medications that makes you confused or drowsy?
- Any water pills?
- Any recent falls or trauma
- How is your support system

- **BINDSMACHOT**

- Birth
- Immunisation
- Nutrition
- Developmental
- Social History
- Medication/Mood as relevant
- Allergies
- Contact
- Home situation
- Occupation
- Travel History

ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

As you find relevant, remember to screen about abuse and violence. As these questions are sensitive and people can be reluctant to share information, you may need to normalise before you ask these questions. You should also give a confidentiality statement if you have not already done so.

- **HEADSSS** for adolescents
 - Home & Environment

- Bullying
 - Some young people find it difficult to adjust to the situation at home or find it stressful. Does this apply to you?
 - Does anything happen at home that you wish should not have happened?
- Education and Employment
 - How is your performance at school or employment?
 - Do you think you are struggling with anything or need help?
 - Has someone been difficult with you at your school or at work?
- Activities
 - How do you prefer to spend your free time?
 - Has there been any change in this lately?
- Drugs
 - Some young people at your age like to experiment with smoking or alcohol or recreational drugs. Do any of your friends do this?
 - What about you?
- Sexuality, Suicide or Depression
 - How is your mood overall?
 - Have you experienced anything unusual lately?
 - Have you had any ideas that other people find strange?
 - Have you ever had any fleeting ideas of harming yourself or others?
 - Are you in any relationship?
 - How long have you been in this relationship?
 - Are you sexually active?
 - Is this your first sexual relationship?
 - If no
 - How many partners have you had this year?
 - Anyone diagnosed with any STIs?
 - Do you have any concerns regarding the sexual activities?

- Does your partner have any other relationship with you than the current romantic relationship such as a trainer, a tutor or a carer?
- Have you had any other partners than this?
- Have you had any sexual activities with these partners?
- Do you know about safe sexual activities?
- Are you using anything for contraception?
- Past Family History
 - Family history of
 - High blood pressure
 - Heart problems
 - Premature non-accidental death
 - Are your parents alive?
 - Do they have any medical problems?
 - Diabetes
 - Kidney conditions
 - Joint problems
 - Relevant hereditary conditions
 - Hemochromatosis
 - Thalassaemia
 - Migraine
 - Closing the conversation
 - Summarise the key points from the history

Medication Represcription or Follow ups

- Start by asking the patient how they are feeling now
- **Returned from the hospital**
 - Will it be alright if we discuss a few things about what has happened so far
 - Diagnosis made
 - Any medications started and if the patient knows about these medications

- If they know how to take the medications
- How much they know about their condition, cause and course and resources available
- If they have any letters or discharge summary
- Any concerns or expectations
- **Established Condition**
 - Control of problem
 - If not controlled
 - Check adherence to the medication
 - Any complications
 - Barrier to access to the medical help
 - Any change or update in treatment required
- **Planning to prescribe new medicine**
 - Check **RATES**
 - Risk of interaction
 - Adherence
 - If poor adherence, assess if it is due to
 - The patient factor
 - Medication factor
 - Doctor factor
 - Tolerance
 - Efficacy
 - Side effects

Interpretation of a test result

- Start by asking if the patient knows why it was done
- If they know the possible outcomes
- Start by talking about the good results first
- Then talk about the ones which are not so good