






Anxiety

Anxiety disorders are highly prevalent and are the second most common mental health presentation in Australian general practice after depression. GP registrars are likely to have had very limited experience in assessing and managing anxiety disorders during their hospital training, and the supervisor can play a key role in increasing their skills. Ideally, registrars should complete formal Level 1 Mental Health Training during their first term.

TEACHING AND LEARNING AREAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common manifestations of anxiety in general practice – GAD, panic disorder, phobias, PTSD • Assessment, including severity, comorbidities (depression, medical conditions etc.), suicidality • Severity scales e.g. K10 DASS21 • Development of the Mental Health Care Plan • Non-pharmacological treatment and psychology/mental health service referral (including local providers) • Medications, including use and S/E – see NPS MedicineWise • Indications for psychiatry referral and local providers • Challenges in children and the elderly 						
PRE-SESSION ACTIVITIES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake the KFP case and discuss it during the session 						
TEACHING TIPS AND TRAPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family history can be very helpful in establishing a diagnosis • Consider anxiety in patients presenting with frequent and/or non-specific presentations e.g. headache, dizziness, chest pains, GIT disturbance • Untreated anxiety often leads to co-morbid depression • Non-pharmacological interventions are equally as effective as medication in mild to moderate anxiety • Avoid benzodiazepines in long term anxiety management 						
RESOURCES 	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 1641 435 1783">Read</td> <td data-bbox="435 1641 1489 1783"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RANZCP Clinical Practice Guidelines • Beyondblue Clinical Practice Guidelines • AFP article – Anxiety Disorders – Assessment and Management in General Practice </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 1783 435 1845">Listen</td> <td data-bbox="435 1783 1489 1845"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression and anxiety - what happens in the brain? </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 1845 435 1906">Watch</td> <td data-bbox="435 1845 1489 1906"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TED talk on anxiety </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RANZCP Clinical Practice Guidelines • Beyondblue Clinical Practice Guidelines • AFP article – Anxiety Disorders – Assessment and Management in General Practice 	Listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression and anxiety - what happens in the brain? 	Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TED talk on anxiety
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FOLLOW UP/ EXTENSION ACTIVITIES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role play a patient presenting with acute anxiety and escalating panic attacks (including discussion of management of acute severe symptoms) 						

Anxiety

Clinical Reasoning Challenge

Sam Moody is a 23 year old law student and presents to you for the first time. He complains of 'not being right' for the past few months, with a constant feeling of dread, interrupted sleep, tiredness, frequent episodes of nausea, occasional palpitations, and a vague headache. He says that at times he feels 'totally overwhelmed' with his studies and his relationships. He is very worried about the impact on his university course. He has no known PMH, takes no medications, denies alcohol and other drug use, and does not smoke.

QUESTION 1. What is the MOST LIKELY diagnosis? List ONE specific diagnosis.

1 _____

QUESTION 2. What are the MOST IMPORTANT investigations to exclude other causes of Sam's symptoms? List up to FOUR.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

QUESTION 3. What are the MOST IMPORTANT broad management approaches for Sam's condition? List up to FOUR.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

Anxiety

ANSWERS

QUESTION 1

What is the MOST LIKELY diagnosis? List ONE specific diagnosis.

- Generalised anxiety disorder

QUESTION 2

What are the MOST IMPORTANT investigations to exclude other causes of Sam's symptoms? List up to FOUR.

- FBC
- TSH
- ECG
- BSL

QUESTION 3

What are the MOST IMPORTANT broad management approaches for Sam's condition? List up to FOUR.

- Education – information on anxiety etc
- Lifestyle advice – exercise/caffeine reduction/sleep hygiene Talking therapies' – psychological intervention e.g. ACT, CBT
- Medication e.g. SSRI, TCAs