

SARA ROSE 135

History of the present illness: Sara Rose, age 18, comes to you with the chief complaint of a heavy, dragging feeling in her left upper abdomen for the past 6 months. The problem was of gradual onset. She does her regular school work, being a senior in high school.



Past medical and social history: Sara is the daughter of the mayor of a small town, the eldest of 9 children. She is a good student and aspires to be a nurse. She has a history of occasional malaria, a fracture of her left foot about a year ago, and pneumonia twice. She has had no immunizations and has no allergies. She has been taking anti-malarial medication for the past year. She was told that her large spleen is because of malaria and that the medication would reduce the size of

the spleen. The spleen has been enlarging during this time but she is still on the medication.

Physical exam: Sara is alert and in no distress. Vital signs: T 100.4; P 110; R 22; BP 98/64; Weight 50 kg. The skin is warm, dry, and normal in texture. Head is normal size and shape. Pupils are equal, round, and responsive to light. The whites of the eyes are white. Corneas are clear. Inside the lower lids is slightly pale. The nose is normal shape

and without sores. The outer ears, canals, and ear drums are normal in appearance. The teeth are normal in number and appearance; the mouth is moist. The tongue is slightly pale. The tonsils are normal size and color. There are no enlarged lymph nodes in the neck, front or back. The thyroid is not enlarged. The patient can move her neck in all directions without pain. Heart sounds have no murmur. Lungs are clear. Bowel sounds are present and normal. Liver is enlarged slightly; it is about 3 cm below the rib margin. The spleen is massively enlarged as shown. The abdomen is soft and non-tender. There are no enlarged lymph nodes in the groin. The kidney area in back is not tender. Arms and legs show no swelling. The patient can move her limbs in all directions without complaint of pain. Respond.

Options:

Treat her yourself.

Send her to a government clinic.

Send her to the capital city, specialty clinic, costs you \$1000.

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Setting and past history:

Is there schistosomiasis in the area? No

Has she lived in this area her whole life? Yes

Is there a lot of malaria in her area? Yes

Is there visceral leishmaniasis in her area? This is unknown but it is very common a few kilometers away.

Does her family of origin have pet dogs? Yes

Does she have any family history of large spleens? One cousin has a big spleen.

Did that cousin live in her area? Yes, she was a next-door neighbor.

Is there hydatid disease in the area? Yes

Are there others in her area with large spleens? Yes, there are many.

Present illness:

Does Sara feel sick? Maybe a little; she is not quite as active as she used to be.

Has she been scratched by a cat? No

Has she had fever, chills, or headaches? Yes, about a year back she had that.

Has she had fevers off and on? Possibly; she doesn't feel feverish but others have remarked that she feels hot.

Does she have a strange body odor? No

Does she have any large lymph nodes? No

Does she have excessive fatigue? No

Has she had bloody diarrhea? No

Is the large spleen soft or firm? It's hard to tell; it seems a bit softer than other malaria spleens.

Laboratory: Urinalysis entirely negative; Hemoglobin 85%.

