Self-Assessment Quiz No. 4

As part of the program of the Continuing Education Committee (CEC), a series of self-assessment quizzes are being published periodically in Physical Therapy on a trial basis. The quizzes are presented in a variety of styles and formats.

An evaluation form accompanies each quiz. To help the CEC determine the value of the quizzes to the membership, you are asked to complete the evaluation form after completing the test and send the form to the committee chairman (name and address are given on the reply form). Answers to the questions appear on page 951.

I. Personal Data

Age: 42 years  Height: 5'10", Weight—190 lbs
Sex: Male       Occupation: Corporate Executive (much desk work)

II. Subjective Examination

A. Onset of Pain—Two days ago, in early PM, when lifting groceries from trunk of car.
B. Nature of Pain—Immediate twinge felt in low back at time of lifting followed by persistent mild "ache" across low back the rest of the day. Pain increased when sitting at dinner and when sitting watching TV that evening; felt as an intense, constant deep ache in the lumbar and sacroiliac regions, more on the left than right. Pain somewhat relieved with a warm bath and recumbency.
   - Pain worse the next AM, aggravated by sitting and bending forward, somewhat relieved when standing; considerable relief when lying down.
   - Pain today about the same as yesterday.
C. Function
   - Able to continue normal activities about the house on day of onset.
   - Went to work yesterday (day after onset) but returned home because of pain when sitting. Spent rest of day lying down.
   - Able to stand and walk about with less discomfort than when sitting, but finds it difficult to stand "completely erect"—tendency to remain slightly forward bent.
   - Much increased pain on coughing, sneezing, and Valsalva.
   - Sharp, grabbing pain felt when attempting to bend forward.

D. Significant negative symptoms:
   - No pain, paresthesias, or dysesthesias into lower extremities.
   - No bowel or bladder dysfunction.

E. Past History—Some minor, intermittent back pain in past but no treatment ever sought or received.

F. General Health—Excellent.

III. Objective Examination

A. Key positive findings
   1. Apparent difficulty rising from chair, removing shoes, socks, and slacks.
   2. Stands with flattened lumbar curve and mild scoliosis with left lumbar convexity, right thoracic convexity. Thoracic spine is held somewhat extended, with shoulder girdle retracted.
   3. Active lumbar movements limited in all planes:
      - Marked restriction of forward bending, backward bending, and left side bending. Supports trunk with hands on thighs on attempted forward bending.
      - Moderate restriction of right side bending and rotation.
   4. Passive left straight leg raising reproduces left lumbosacral pain at 60 cm heel-to-plinth.

B. Key negative findings
   a. Strength and sensation in L2-S2 segments intact.
   b. Patellar and Achilles tendon jerks active and symmetrical.

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the probable pathogenesis of this patient's problem as it relates to symptoms and signs. What is the source of the pain? Why is sitting especially uncomfortable? Why was the pain increased upon waking the morning following the onset?
2. What are the goals of management in the acute stage in this case? What measures should be taken to meet these goals?

3. What are the long-term goals of management to be considered as the acute stage resolves? What measures should be taken to meet these goals?

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**Evaluation of Self-Assessment Quiz No. 4**

The Continuing Education Committee wishes to evaluate the usefulness and appeal of self-assessment quizzes for the readership. We are interested in your response and suggestions regarding this quiz. Please detach and mail to the address below.

Please check appropriate box:

1. The quiz was
   - enjoyable
   - frustrating
   - stimulating
   - boring

2. The questions were
   - too easy
   - too hard
   - just right

3. Please indicate how useful this quiz was to you in identifying areas of strengths and/or weaknesses for planning your own continuing education.
   - does not apply to my practice
   - not helpful
   - helpful

4. Were you stimulated to seek further information?
   - yes
   - no

5. Do you feel self-assessment could be of value to you?
   - yes
   - no

6. Should the quizzes continue to be published in the Journal?
   - yes
   - no

Comments and/or suggestions

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Please send to:

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