

A GENERAL CHECKLIST FOR DIAGNOSIS - Mark L Graber et al

HIGH RISK SITUATIONS FOR DIAGNOSTIC ERROR

- Have I ruled out must-not-miss diagnoses ?
- Did I just accept the first diagnosis that came to mind?
- Was the diagnosis suggested to me by the patient, nurse or another MD?
- Did I consider other organ systems besides the obvious one ?
- Is there data about this patient I haven't obtained and reviewed ?
Old records? Family? Primary care provider ?
- Are there any pieces that don't fit ?
- Did I read the X-ray myself ?
- Was this patient handed off to me from a previous shift ?
- Was this patient seen in the ER or clinic recently for the same problem ?
- Was I interrupted/distracted excessively while evaluating this patient ?
- Am I feeling fatigued right now, or cognitively overloaded?
- Is this a patient I don't like for some reason? Or like too much? (a friend, relative)

What to Do in High Risk Situations:

- 1. Pause to reflect -Take a diagnostic "time out"**
- 2. Consider the universal antidote: What else could this be?**
- 3. Make sure the patient knows when and how to get back to you if necessary: if their symptoms change or worsen or don't resolve**