

## Chest Pain in the Outpatient Setting Week of October 13, 2008

- A. Costochondritis
- B. Pulmonary embolism
- C. Myocardial infarction
- D. Pneumonia
- E. Reflux esophagitis
- F. Herpes zoster
- G. Stable angina
- H. Lung cancer
- I. Pneumothorax

For each patient with chest pain, select the most likely diagnosis from the above list.

1. A 50-year-old man comes to your clinic with severe central chest pain that is spreading into his left arm. It is present at rest and he has had it for 45 minutes. Acetaminophen has not helped. He has hypertension and smokes 20 cigarettes a day.
2. A 20-year-old man complains of severe chest pain in the right side of his chest. The pain is worse when he breathes in. On examination he is tall and thin. The right side of his chest is hyper resonant to percussion and breath sounds are reduced on this side.
3. A 17-year-old adolescent complains of constant pain in the substernal region that has persisted for two days. He is tender to palpation over the sternum.
4. A 65 year old male presents with progressive left-sided chest pain, He has developed a cough, has lost 15 lbs. He quit smoking 2 years ago.
5. A 55-year-old man presents with a 1 month history of substernal chest pain that occurs when he takes the stairs at work. He has a history of hypertension, and was noted to have an HDL of 25 on a recent executive physical.
6. A 35-year-old lady with an otherwise unremarkable past medical history presents with pain on the left side of her chest that radiates from her back to the sternum along the chest wall. She had an “outbreak of zits” on her chest about 2 weeks ago.
7. A 45-year-old lady underwent a total abdominal hysterectomy and bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy because of recently diagnosed ovarian cancer three days ago. She had sudden onset right-sided chest pain and shortness of breath, She is tachycardic with a rate of 110.
8. A 26-year-old internal medicine resident keeps waking up with substernal chest pain. It is worse when he is on call and partakes of the culinary delights of “Chez Med.”
9. A 70-year-old man with a history of COPD presents with a two-day history of productive cough, fever to 101, and pain in the left chest.

Suggestions for discussion:

- Estimation of pretest probability of CAD is extremely important when planning evaluation of chest pain (risk factors, age, character/location of symptoms).
- Don't forget the simple stuff: brainstorm examples of this like “severe anemia”
- The italicized recommendations in the attached ACP guidelines are an excellent starting point to build your self-confidence in ordering the right test on the right patient.

## Outpatient Evaluation of Chest Pain

