

**Answers to Application Through Critical Thinking Questions in
D'Amico and Barbarito: *Health & Physical Assessment in Nursing*, 3rd Edition**

Chapter 1:

Case Study

Mary Wong is a 19-year-old college freshman living in the dormitory. She has come to the University Health Center with the following complaints: nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain increasing in severity, diarrhea, a fever, and dry mouth. She tells you, the nurse, "I have had abdominal pain for about 12 hours with nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea." These symptoms, she tells you, "all started after supper in the student cafeteria on campus."

You conduct an interview and follow it with a physical assessment, which reveals the following: symmetric abdomen, bowel sounds in all quadrants, tender to palpation in the lower quadrants, guarding. Mary's skin is warm and moist, her lips and mucous membranes are dry.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Identify the findings as objective or subjective data.

Answer: **Subjective data** are information that the patient experiences and communicates to the nurse. In this case the subjective data is the complaints of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, dry mouth, feelings of jumpiness and racing heart.

Objective data are observed or measured by the professional nurse. In this case the objective data are symmetric abdomen, bowel sounds in all quadrants, abdominal tenderness in the lower quadrants, guarding of abdomen, and dry mucous membranes and moist, warm skin.

2. Prepare a narrative nursing note from the data.

Answer: When implementing narrative notes, the nurse utilizes words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs to record information. The information may be recorded in chronologic order from initial contact through conclusion of the assessment, or in categories according to the type of data collected. An example of a narrative note is:

"Mary Wong is a 19 year old college freshman seen in the clinic today for complaints of nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain increasing in severity, diarrhea, a fever, and dry mouth, racing heart and anxiousness. Her nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain began 12 hours after eating a meal at the school cafeteria. Her physical exam shows symmetric abdomen, bowel sounds in all quadrants, abdomen tender to palpation in the lower quadrants and guarding. Her skin is warm and moist and her lips and mucous membranes are dry. Mary also states three of her other friends ate at the same time and are experiencing similar symptoms. Mary denies any other complaints. Labs drawn, stool cultures obtained. Mary is advised to increase fluid intake including drinking an electrolyte replacement fluid to maintain hydration. Follow up call to the State Health Department made for suspected food-borne illness or contamination."

3. What factors must be considered in conducting the comprehensive health assessment of Mary Wong? Provide rationale.

Answer: In conducting a comprehensive assessment it is important to consider many factors such as cultural, developmental, family, psychological, emotional and environmental factors. In Mary's case it is critical to assess the external environmental factors because Mary and three of her friends all become ill after eating the same food in the campus cafeteria making it highly likely they were exposed to a food-borne illness from contamination during food preparation. This needs to be reported to the State Health Department for follow up.

4. How would you cluster the data you obtained from your history and physical examination of Mary?

Answer: The analysis of assessment data includes clustering of information. The clusters consist of related pieces of information. In Mary's case it is important to cluster her findings to see where the relationships are. There are two primary clusters:

- jumpy feelings and racing heart
- abdominal pain, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, fever
- dry mouth

The jumpy feelings and racing heart are likely related to her increased use of caffeine which are not necessarily related to her current situation that has brought her in to the clinic. The fever, abdominal pain, nausea, diarrhea and vomiting are related to the primary concern which is likely related to a food borne illness. Her dry mouth is a symptom of her dehydration.

5. Prior to developing a nursing diagnosis, what must you do?

Answer: Prior to making a nursing diagnosis the nurse analyzes and synthesizes the data. To do this he/she compares data to normative values and standards and clusters or groups similar data. This helps him/her select the appropriate nursing diagnosis and plan/implement care.

Chapter 2:

Case Study

Casey is a 2-year-old girl whose mother brought her in for a checkup. Her mother reports that Casey was born at 40 weeks' gestation after an uncomplicated pregnancy and vaginal delivery. She is pretty sure that Casey has met each developmental milestone at the normal age and does not have any problems that she has identified. Casey has no history of medical problems or diseases other than an occasional "cold" and her immunizations are up-to-date. Casey is a very energetic child and is often running around in the back yard and loves to play in the sandbox and with their dog Max. The mother states that she is very careful with what she feeds her family and that Casey has good eating habits although sometimes she throws her food at the dog and laughs. Casey's parents have some good friends whose youngest child is being carefully followed by his pediatrician because of what is thought to be "significant developmental delays." Consequently, Casey's mother is very concerned about developmental milestones and wants her daughter

“checked to make sure everything is all right.” The mother states that she has read a lot of information on the Internet on child development but asks many questions regarding the care and needs of her child. Mom seems very anxious during the visit and very concerned that may she has missed something in Casey’s development.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. What are the expectations regarding the physical development for a 2-year-old child such as Casey?

Answer:

- Head better proportioned
- Extremities grow faster than trunk
- Decreasing heart rate
- Lordosis in young toddlers is more pronounced
- Protruding abdomen that gradually flattens
- Visual acuity 20/40
- Tries to jump
- Walks up and down stairs
- Legs appear straighter, as bowlegged appearance diminishes
- Turns doorknobs
- Imitates vertical stroke with a crayon
- Uses a spoon without spilling
- Unbuttons buttons
- Builds a tower of 6 or 7 blocks
- Can think through plans to reach a goal
- Symbolic play
- Gender identity

*Refer to chapter sections on infants and children

2. What level of language development is expected for a toddler?

Answer:

- Speech includes simple phrases
- Understands most of what is said
- Vocabulary of about 200 words

3. Identify at least two standardized tools that are used to assess physical and psychosocial development across the age span.

Answer:

- Growth Scales
- Denver Development Screening Test
- Body Mass Index
- The Child Development Inventory
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)

4. What are the expectations for cognitive development for a 2-year-old child?

Answer:

- Piaget’s preoperational stage