

My patient: Primary Diagnosis: Viral Meningitis

HPI: Naveah Jackson, a 7-year-old female, presents with a 3-day history of fever, irritability, and vomiting. Naveah has a past medical history of anoxic brain injury at birth. She is nonverbal, wheelchair-bound, and requires total assistance with activities of daily living. She lives with her single mother in a rural area with limited access to specialized pediatric care.

A. Consider the client's HPI. What factors contribute to the complexity of the client? Explain your rationale and support it with evidence.

When considering the patient in this scenario several factors contribute to the complexity of her medical care. Naveah's medical history includes an anoxic brain injury at birth which rendered her non-verbal, wheelchair bound and in need of total assistance with activities of daily living. The implications of an anoxic brain injury require around the clock care, as well as complex and specialized therapies to enhance patient outcomes and achieve personalized goals. Additionally, Naveah lives with her single mother in a rural area with limited access to specialized care. These factors can contribute to the marginalization of patients like Naveah, who face many barriers in complex health care situations. Research shows that children and youths with acquired brain injuries may experience persistent discrimination and ableism, in addition to health inequities propelled by social disparities (Lindsay, Patel, Ragunathan & Fuentes, 2023). These factors may present a challenge requiring comprehensive care from Naveah's care team.

B. Consider the client's primary diagnosis alongside their HPI. How does the client's medical history complicate the diagnostic process, and what strategies should the FNP use to avoid diagnostic errors? Explain your rationale and support it with evidence.

Naveah's history may complicate the identification of her primary diagnosis, as symptoms such as spasticity, hyperreflexia and altered consciousness may overlap. Additionally, her speech impairment makes it difficult to report symptoms. When faced with the challenge of providing care to patients with complex medical histories like Naveah, it is crucial to involve the patient's caretakers in medical planning and decision making. Naveah's mother can provide vital insights into her baseline mentation, the extent of her neurological deficits and tolerance of therapies and medications when confirming diagnosis and treatment.

Viral meningitis is typically a self-limiting disease process, presenting with fever, headache, neck stiffness and photophobia. However, children with compromised immune systems and complex medical histories may experience a more advanced burden of disease (Cantu & Das, 2023). The gold standard diagnostic process for viral meningitis requires a lumbar puncture with CSF analysis (Cantu & Das, 2023). In order to avoid diagnostic errors, the FNP should ensure proper sterile technique, as well as proper patient positioning during the lumbar puncture.

Naveah's mother can aid in positioning, as well as keeping the patient calm during the procedure, to help ensure accuracy. The utilization of evidence-based technique when collecting diagnostic samples can help the FNP ensure accuracy and promote prompt disease identification and treatment.

C. Consider the clinical decision-making process as referenced in this week's lesson. What factors specific to your assigned client and situation (e.g., available resources, finances, etc.) influence the FNP's decision-making process in