

Medicine – General

Physical Examination

A. Before you start

- Know that all examinations will be in a normal patient. (As the Dr. mentioned)
- You should know the indication of each procedure.
- Remember to always examine from the right side of the patient. (If you're left handed, tell your examiner)
- After general appearance, people usually start with the hand, but if you want to start with the head then there's no problem with that.
- For the findings, you should say the negatives: "There's no clubbing, no splinter hemorrhage, no leukonychia..." and the same applies to the rest of the body.

B. Introduction: (WIP³E)

1. **Wash hands:** Wash your hands in front of the examiner or bring a sanitizer with you.
2. **Introduce yourself:** My name is "...", I'm a third year medical student.
3. **Explain the examination:** "I'm going to do some physical examination on you which mainly involves looking at your hand and face, and feeling some pulses."
4. **Permission:** After explaining, take permission to proceed. "Do you mind?"
5. **Position:** The position should be at 45°
6. **Privacy:** I should maintain the patient's privacy. (Close the curtains).
7. **Exposure of the trunk:** "Can you take off your shirt please?"

C. General appearance: (ABC²DE)

1. **Appearance:** "The patient is (young, middle aged or old) and looks well."
2. **Body built:** "He looks (normal, thin or obese)."
3. **Connections:** "The patient is not connected to any."
4. **Color:** "He doesn't look pale or jaundiced."
5. **Distress:** "The patient looks comfortable and he's not using any accessory muscles to breath, and so, he doesn't appear to be in any pain or respiratory distress."
6. **ELSE:** "He is conscious and well orientated."

D. Vital signs:

1. **Pulse Rate:** (Measure the radial pulse)
 - I. **Rate** (Measure over 30 seconds and tell your examiner that ideally it should be measured over 1 minute. Normal rate is between 60-100).
 - II. **Rhythm:** Regularly regular. Abnormal: irregularly irregular or regularly irregular or irregularly regular
 - III. **Synchronization:** Check other radial pulse to see if there's a radio-radial delay and tell your examiner that ideally you'd also check for radio-femoral delay)
 - IV. **Volume:** determined from the carotid.
2. **Respiratory rate:** Try to take it while taking the pulse rate. Usually the normal range is between 16-25 breaths per minute.
3. **Temperature:** Normal temperatures range from 36.6-37.2
4. **Blood Pressure:** (Explained below) – ideally, you would check BP in both arms.

E. The hand:

First, start with **inspecting** and feeling the hand.

E.g.: “Hands look normal in color and feel symmetrically warm. There aren't any signs of cyanosis and no nicotine staining.” – Be careful! Sometimes the patient might be a smoker and have nicotine staining.

Nails:

1. **Clubbing*:** Ask the patient to bring his two nail beds of his two index fingers together to check for clubbing. Clubbing can be a sign of lung cancer, pulmonary fibrosis, bronchiectasis and IBD.
2. **Splinter hemorrhage*:** Found in infective endocarditis.
3. **Leukonychia*:** sign of hypoalbuminemia, liver disease or nephritic syndrome.
4. **Koilonychia*:** sign of iron deficiency anemia.

Palm:

1. **Osler's nodes & Janeway lesions*:** signs of infective endocarditis.
2. **Palmar xanthomata*:** sign of hyperlipidemia
3. **Palmar erythema*:** sign of liver cirrhosis, polycythemia, and pregnancy.
4. **Pigmentation of palmar creases:** sign of Addison's disease but may be normal in Asians and black people.
5. **Paleness of palmar creases:** sign of anemia.

* Look at the pictures at the end of the document

6. **Dupuytren's contracture***: sign of alcoholism.
7. **Raynaud's phenomenon**: abnormal response of fingers and toes to cold. First turns white (ischemia), then blue (cyanosis) then red (revascularization).

Dorsum:

1. **Muscle wasting**: decrease physical activity
2. **Pigmentations**
3. **Skin lesions**. (Including scars)
4. **Tendon Xanthomata**: sign of hyperlipidemia

Flapping tremor & fine tremor:

1. **Flapping tremor**: sign of CO₂ retention, hepatic encephalopathy or renal failure. To examine: ask the patient to extend their arms and raise their wrists to 90 degrees.
2. **Fine tremor**: it could be normal. If not, may indicate hypoglycemia or Parkinson's.

F. The head:

Scalp:

Hair deficiency or excess.

Mouth:

1. **Central cyanosis** (Blue discoloration): Ask the patient to open his mouth and lift his tongue up. Sign of hypoxemia (deoxygenated hemoglobin)
2. **Oral/dental hygiene**.
3. **Dryness of the mouth**: dehydration
4. **Any lesion**: ulcer, bleeding
5. **Special smell**:
 - a. **Fetor hepaticus**: "Sweet smell": sign of liver disease.
 - b. **Uremic fetor**: "Fish breathe": sign of renal failure.
 - c. Cigarette smell in smokers.

Eyes:

1. **Jaundice (in the sclera, better seen in daylight)**: sign of liver disease, hemolytic anemia.
2. **Pallor (in the conjunctiva)**: sign of anemia
3. **Xanthelasma**: (Patches of yellow skin around the lower or upper eyelids): sign of hyperlipidemia or primary biliary cirrhosis

G. The neck:

(If there is any swelling, describe it: site, size, shape, skin, and surrounding tissue)

1. **Lymph nodes**[†]: Submental, submandibular, tonsillar, parotid, preauricular, post auricular, occipital, cervical and supraclavicular.
2. Salivary gland
3. Thyroid

Lymph nodes:

(If you feel a lymph node you should describe it as you describe any lump)

4. Epitrochlear
5. Axillary
6. Cervical
7. Supraclavicular
8. Inguinal

H. The lower limb:

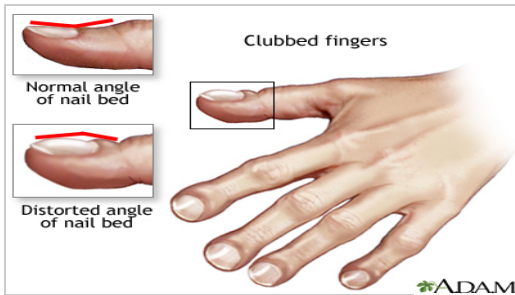
1. Lower limb edema
2. Peripheral pulses: **popliteal, posterior tibial and dorsalis pedis pulses.**
3. Any change in the nails, dorsal, or the sole of the foot.

I. The back: Sacral edema

J. Thank the patient (Now he can wear his shirt)

[†] Look at the pictures at the end of the document

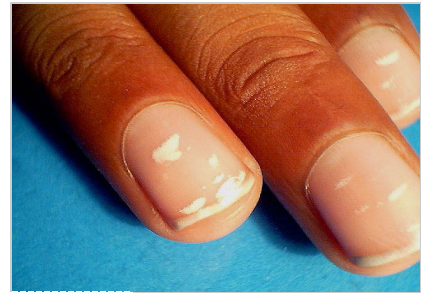
Pictures:



Clubbing



Splinter Hemorrhage



Leukonychia



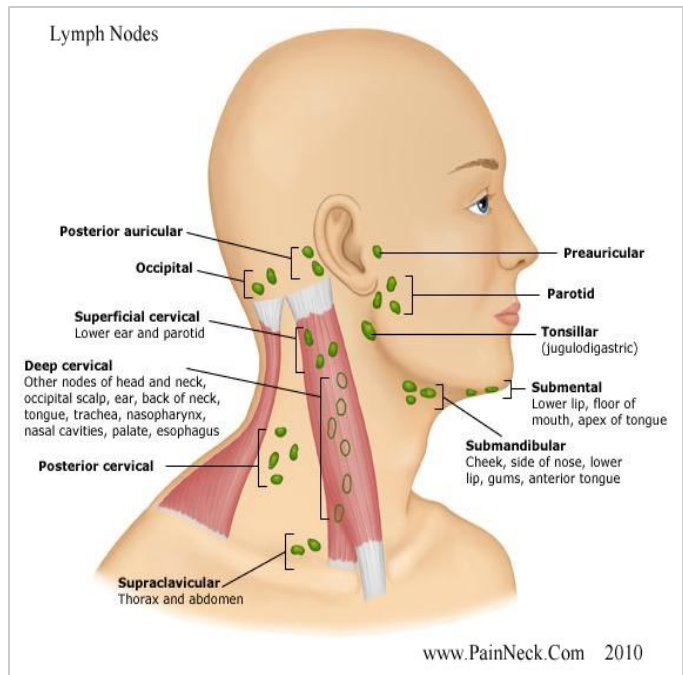
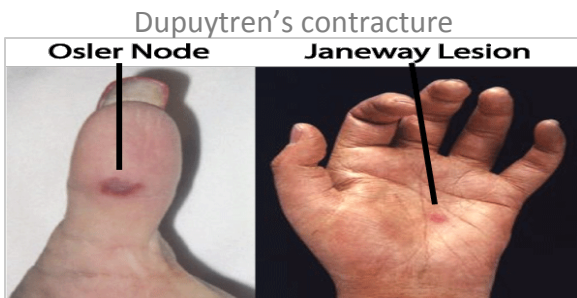
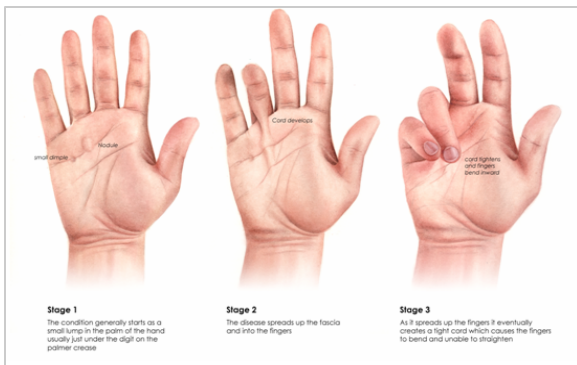
Palmar erythema



Koilonychia



Tendon Xanthomata



432 OSCE TEAM

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