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Communicating with Peers

Case Study: Personal Beliefs at the Emergency Department

Presentation

A gipsy family comes to the emergency department. The patient is a 14-year-old girl who attends referring vaginal itching and urinary discomfort. As part of the physical examination of the patient, an examination of the genital area is necessary. Relatives are opposed to this because of their beliefs and that the fact of exploration may simulate a loss of her virginity.

Communication

First of all, one of the most important things is appealing to courtesy using phrases like: "To complete the exam, I **would** need to examine the genital area so I can make the right diagnosis". There always have to have an **agreement with the patient** and not only with parents, so things could be much easier if they see that their daughter agrees.

It would also be necessary to show **empathy** and reflect that you understand the parents' concern and understand their fear, but try to make them see that their fears are irrational and that exploration carries no risk.

It would be interesting to show that "it is one routine exploration", that it is not the first time you do it, so you can **inspire some trust**.

Differential Diagnosis

Vaginitis vs low urinary tract infection

Evolution

After the proper exploration, you can see that the most probable diagnosis is vaginitis, according to urine examination that makes less probable the urinary infection.

Treatment Received

Thanks to the exploration performed, you have avoided the wrong use of an antibiotic and allow a favorable evolution with hygienic measures.



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