

Case Study Synopsis

Case Study: Pain

Suggested Uses: Fundamentals

Wrenda Fisher, a 35-year-old mother of two, visits the pain clinic of the regional medical center in her community. Wrenda is interviewed by a certified pain management nurse. Her chief complaint is recent onset back pain, which has limited her ability to care for her children. Initial assessment includes quality of pain, factors that impact pain perception, and client behaviors such as guarding.

Anxiety and acute pain are identified by the nurse as priority problems. The nurse selects a short term goal and recognizes the need to discuss the plan of care with Ms. Fisher. After receiving prescriptions for the client, the nurse provides teaching about NSAIDs, cold applications, and use of the client's heating pad at home.

A week later, a TENS unit is prescribed, and the nurse provides teaching and demonstrates application of the unit to Ms. Fisher. A schedule IV analgesic is also prescribed. The nurse responds to an inaccuracy in the scheduled medication count.

Ms. Fisher is later admitted to acute care with worsening back pain. The nurse administers an intramuscular medication, and later provides assistance with guided imagery and relaxation exercises. Ms. Fisher undergoes back surgery. Postoperatively, the nurse teaches the client about use of the PCA pump, calculates the total dosage received by the client, and recognizes when the PCA pump is no longer needed. The nurse provides teaching about the use of stool softeners in conjunction with opioids.

The nurse responds to two other nurses who are talking about Mrs. Fisher in the hallway, demonstrating respect for the client's privacy and veracity in providing accurate information. Mrs. Fisher is soon discharged and is able to manage her pain.