

UNIT 1: APPROACH TO THE PATIENT

Educational Topic 3: Pap Test and DNA Probes/Cultures

Rationale: The Pap smear is one of the most effective screening tests used in medicine today. Proper technique in performing the Pap smear and obtaining specimens for DNA probes and/or microbiologic culture will improve accuracy.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

A student should be able to:

- Perform a Pap smear
- Obtain specimens to detect sexually transmitted infections
- Explain the purpose of these tests to the patient

TEACHING CASE

CASE: JA is a 24-year-old G0 female who presents for an annual exam. She had a normal Pap smear reading with no intraepithelial lesion three years ago. She is currently sexually active with a new partner for the last 2 months, and has had four lifetime partners. She does not report any history of sexually transmitted diseases. She is currently using birth control pills for contraception. She is just finishing her menstrual cycle and is spotting; her periods are regular without problems. Her review of systems is negative. She smokes one pack of cigarettes per week; she does not drink and states that she has occasionally used marijuana. Her vitals and physical exam are normal.

COMPETENCY-BASED DISCUSSION & KEY TEACHING POINTS:

Competencies addressed:

- Patient Care
- Medical Knowledge
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Professionalism

1. How are cervical samples for pap smears collected?
2. What are the different laboratory techniques available to perform a pap smear?

3. In addition to performing a Pap smear, what other tests might you recommend for this patient, and how do you proceed to obtain them?
4. How often does this patient need to undergo a Pap smear?
5. What risk factors does this patient have for cervical dysplasia and cancer?
6. If while performing the speculum exam, you notice a gross lesion on the cervix, what would your next step in management be?
7. What other counseling or advice do you need to discuss with this patient?

REFERENCES

Beckman CRB, et al. Obstetrics and Gynecology. 7th ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins, 2013.

Hacker NF, Moore JG, et al. Essentials of Obstetrics and Gynecology. 5th ed. Philadelphia: Saunders, 2010.

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