

SAQ 1

A 23-year-old man with known asthma is brought to ED by ambulance with an acute exacerbation.

- a) What features on history would concern you that his attack might be severe
- b) What features on examination would suggest he had a severe exacerbation
- c) Clinical examination confirms he has a severe episode. List and justify the investigations you would perform
- d) List your immediate treatment priorities

Answer

- a. Known brittle, ICU admissions, Frequent steroid courses, significant co-morbidities, known poor compliance
- b. Altered LOC, reduced RR, accessory muscle use, quiet chest, signs pneumothorax, signs coinfection, cardiovascular compromise
- c. CXR, coinfection/pneumothorax, ABG evidence of resp failure (acidosis with normocarbia -hypercarbia)

- d. Supplemental O₂ if Sat <93%

Optimise patient position

Bronchodilator therapy

Salbutamol continuous nebs, IV boluses and/or infusion

Ipratropium bromide nebs