

Case 1

HB is a 76 year old man who was admitted to the hospital because of weakness and shortness of breath. He has a long history of atrial fibrillation and his heart rate had been well controlled on a high dose of diltiazem combined with metoprolol and digoxin. He was on warfarin (the blood thinner) to prevent a stroke. It was discovered during this hospitalization that his heart rate was falling into the 20's causing his severe weakness and leading to a gathering of fluid in his lungs.

As a result, his diltiazem medication was cut in half and the digoxin was stopped. HB's heart rate came back to normal and he felt well.

When he went home, he thought his warfarin was the medicine stopped rather than his digoxin, even though it was written down, so within 3 days, he came back to the hospital weak with a heart rate of 36 and he couldn't speak or move his right hand. Without the warfarin, he had had a small stroke. Warfarin was restarted and the digoxin was stopped and he got better.

He went home, but lives alone and had some persisting weakness and fell. His daughter knew of a good assisted living place and arranged for HB to stay there until he felt stronger. The facility called HB's outpatient doctor who put him on the medicines he was on before his 2 hospitalizations. HB passed out during his 3rd day at assisted living and was readmitted to the hospital with a heart rate of 24 and fluid in his lungs.

Case 2

A 50 year old African-American man, GJ, went to the emergency department because of a cold that wouldn't go away. He does not have a regular doctor. At the ED, he received a chest X-ray that showed a spot on his lung. A CT scan was performed right away and a 2 cm, irregular mass was seen. The patient was told that he might have a tumor, he was sent home on an antibiotic, and an appointment was arranged with a lung specialist.

Before the appointment, GJ started feeling better, so he figured the antibiotic had worked. He didn't see the lung specialist. He felt well for the next five months then started coughing and having chest pain. He went back to the emergency room and his chest x-ray showed a 7 centimeter mass that also involved his ribs.

Others

- Diabetes (education, med adjustment, self management)
- Blood pressure control and medication adherence
- Medication interactions and multiple specialties or venues