

Adapted with permission from Mark Graber, MD. Source: Graber ML. Educational strategies to reduce diagnostic error: can you teach this stuff? *Adv Health Sci Educ* 2009;14:63-9.

- Was my judgment affected by any other bias?
 - Do I need to make the diagnosis now, or can I wait?
 - What is the worst-case scenario?
 - What are the “do not miss” diagnoses that could be relevant?
- Embar on a plan, but acknowledge uncertainty and ensure a pathway for follow-up.

- Obtain your own, complete medical history.
- Perform a focused and purposeful physical examination.
- Generate some initial hypotheses and differentiate these with appropriate additional questions, physical examination, or diagnostic tests.
- Pause to reflect—take a diagnostic time-out: Was I comprehensive?
- Did I settle on a diagnosis prematurely?
- Have I made a diagnosis despite evidence to the contrary?

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For more information, visit <http://www.patientsafetyauthority.org>.

This diagnostic checklist accompanies Diagnostic error in acute care. Pa Patient Saf Advis [online]. 2010 Sep [cited 2010 Sep 1]. Available from Internet: [http://www.patientsafetyauthority.org/ADVISORIES/AdvisoryLibrary/2010/Sep7\(3\)/Pages/76.aspx](http://www.patientsafetyauthority.org/ADVISORIES/AdvisoryLibrary/2010/Sep7(3)/Pages/76.aspx).

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A Physician Checklist for Diagnosis

While the use of checklists has been shown to be helpful in many settings, such use to prevent diagnostic error has yet to be tested and is to be undertaken with the knowledge that it may produce negative effects (e.g., increased test ordering, delays in diagnosis and treatment), especially if the initial, intuitive diagnosis was correct.