

Effective Physician Exam Teaching_Lee & Koppula

Effective Physical Exam Teaching

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Physical Examination :
The evaluation of the body to determine its state of health (presence of absence of physical problems). The techniques for examination include inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation and smell.

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Objectives

- Reflect on your own experiences in teaching physical exam skills in the clinical setting
- Consider learners' experiences in learning physical exam skills
- Develop an approach for teaching physical exam skills in the clinical setting

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Physical Exam Skills

- Physical examination skills included in the list of dimensions of professional competence (under technical skill) by Epstein and Hundert 2002¹

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Physical Exam Skills

Clinical Competence:
"the habitual use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clinical reasoning, emotions, values and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and the community being served"

Epstein and Hundert 2002¹

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Physical Exam Skills

- What are your experiences teaching physical exam skills in the clinical setting?

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Physical Exam Skills

- Highly valued skill essential to medical practice¹
- Some literature suggests that physical examination skills across specialities are declining²
- Some literature suggests physical examination skills in medical students and residents are declining³
- Some evidence suggests that physical examination skills do not improve much after the final year of medical school⁴
- Physical exam teaching in the clinic and with real patients is critical to skill development

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**Physical Exam Skills
Challenges in Teaching**

- **Challenges⁵**
 - Teachers lack confidence in own skills
 - Teachers lack skills to effectively and efficiently demonstrate physical exam skills
 - Medical schools teach full systematic approaches
 - Lack of longitudinal curriculum

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**Physical Exam Skills
Challenges in Teaching**

- **Challenges⁵**
 - Lack of clear learning objectives
 - Lack of explanation findings
 - Too teacher focused and not learner focused
 - Deficient physical exam assessment (including residency)
 - Medical institutions not valuing clinical skills (rely too much on technology)

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**Physical Exam Skills
Challenges in Teaching**

- **Challenges⁶**
 - Lack of bedside teaching
 - Perceived subjective nature of the physical exam
 - Residents as teachers of physical exam
 - Lack of time and patients
 - Inconsistent and episodic nature of physical diagnostic skills in education
 - Failure to test what we teach

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Physical Exam Skills

- What are our residents' experiences learning physical exam skills?

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Physical Exam Skills

- **Small group work**
 - You are teaching a first year family medicine resident in your busy family medicine clinic. The resident sees the patient who is having right knee pain (she had a fall while skiing on the weekend). The resident reviews the case with you and has performed a limited physical exam. She advises you that she is not comfortable performing a knee exam. You have 4 patients waiting to see you.....
 - What are your steps in teaching this resident the knee exam?

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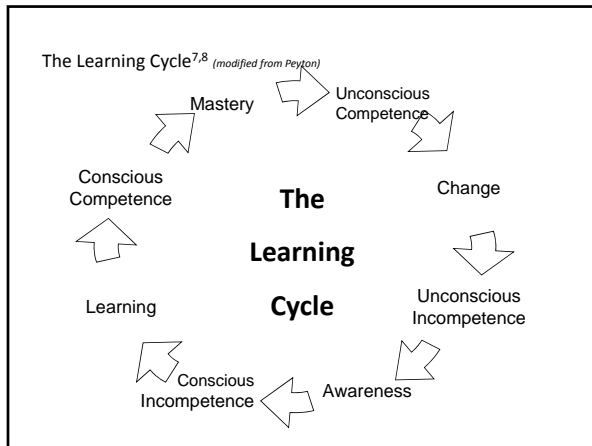
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Physical Exam Skills

- **Levels of skills⁷**
 1. Factual knowledge – does the learner know what the manoeuvre is?
 2. Psychomotor skill – can the learner do the manoeuvre properly?
 3. Applied knowledge / clinical reasoning – does the learner know when to do it?
 4. Clinical reasoning / expertise – can the learner interpret the results?

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Physical Exam Skills

• **Model for teaching technical skills⁹**

- Plan ahead – review objectives, assess needs, prepare learner
- Demonstrate – provide explicit commentary
- Observe the learner - learner to verbalize, encourage self assessment
- Feedback – timely, specific and objective, performance based
- Encourage self-assessment – learner perceptions
- Allow for practice under less than ideal conditions – increase complexity
- Prepare to modify approach – unprepared learner, different learners

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Physical Exam Skills

General Recommendations

• **Teachers⁶**

- Acquire bedside teaching skills and improve demonstration skills (teach it well)
- Reinforce and update own exam skills
- Use multiple teaching methods
- Make it fun!

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General Recommendations

• **Content⁶**

- Integrate basic sciences into physical exam teaching
- Be guided by diagnostic hypotheses
- Incorporate evidence based physical exam
- Use technology to aid in teaching

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Physical Exam Skills

Resources

- Text Books
- Journal Articles
- Teaching DVD's
- Models
- Undergraduate Course Manuals
- Websites
- Other?

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Objectives

- Reflect on your own experiences in teaching physical exam skills
- Consider learners' experiences in learning physical exam skills
- Develop an approach (model) for teaching physical exam skills

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"Use your five senses...Learn to see, learn to hear, learn to feel, learn to smell, and know that by practice alone you can become expert."

Osler

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Thank You. 

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Textbooks

Seidel et al. Mosby's Guide to Physical Examination. 3rd Edition Mosby Canada Inc.

Bates, B. A Guide to Physical Examination and History. 5th Edition. Lippincott.

Schwartz, M. Textbook of Physical Diagnosis: History and Examination. 2nd Edition, Philadelphia WB Saunders.

Degowin, RL. Degowin and Degowin's Diagnostic Examination. 6th Edition. Brown & James.

Journal Articles

JAMA. The Rational Clinical Examination Series.

Websites

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<http://depts.washington.edu/physdx/index.html>

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