

## Jaundice

### Assumption

The student understands the anatomy and physiology of the hepatobiliary system to include liver, gall bladder and pancreas, with particular reference to surgical jaundice.

### Goal

The student will be able to describe how to differentiate medical and surgical causes of jaundice, discuss the management of surgical jaundice including the diagnostic and therapeutic plan.

### Objectives

By the end of the core surgical clerkship, the student will be able to:

1. Describe the anatomy relevant to surgical causes of jaundice.
2. List the various causes (hepatic, biliary, and pancreatic) of jaundice.
3. Differentiate surgical from medical causes of jaundice.
4. Describe a diagnostic plan for identifying the cause of surgical jaundice.
5. Explain the role of endoscopy and interventional radiology in the management of obstructive jaundice.
6. Describe the indications for surgical intervention and the surgical options available to treat surgical jaundice.

### Problems

For each of the following problems, answer these questions:

- What further data should be obtained from the patient's history that gives clues about etiology?
  - What physical exam findings would you look for?
  - What is your differential diagnosis?
  - What work-up would you recommend (include laboratory tests and diagnostic interventions)?
  - What therapy or treatment would you recommend?
1. Patient # 1 - A 35-year-old woman presents with onset of acute abdominal pain, fever, and dark-colored urine.
  2. Patient # 2 - A 65-year-old man presents with itching, anorexia, and yellowish discoloration of eyes.

### Skills

1. Conduct a focused history and physical including general, abdominal, and rectal examination.
2. Emphasize the following:
  - a. Scleral icterus
  - b. Murphy's sign
  - c. Courvoisier's sign
  - d. Caput medusae
  - e. Rectal varices

**Jaundice** (continued)

**Teaching Hints**

1. Present a case in which jaundice could be medical or surgical in origin. Ask students to develop an algorithm for differentiating between medical and surgical jaundice (differential diagnosis and investigations).
2. Discuss case scenarios of pediatric etiologies.
3. Have students observe laparoscopic cholecystectomy, whenever possible.

**Prevention**

Discuss the following:

1. Nutritional considerations for prevention of gallstones
2. Early recognition of biliary obstruction to prevent cholangitis
3. Use of hepatitis vaccine

**Special Considerations**

Discuss the diagnosis and management of choledochal cysts.