



OSCE Checklist: Headache History Taking

Opening the consultation	
1	Wash your hands and don PPE if appropriate
2	Introduce yourself to the patient including your name and role
3	Confirm the patient's name and date of birth
4	Explain that you'd like to take a history from the patient
5	Gain consent to proceed with taking a history
Presenting complaint	
6	Use open questioning to explore the patient's presenting complaint
History of presenting complaint	
7	Site: ask where the headache is
8	Onset: clarify when the headache first started and if it the onset was sudden or gradual
9	Character: ask the patient to describe how the headache feels
10	Radiation: ask if the headache moves anywhere else
11	Associated symptoms: ask if there are any other associated symptoms
12	Time course: ask how the headache has changed over time
13	Exacerbating or relieving factors: ask if anything makes the headache worse or better
14	Severity: ask how severe the headache is on a scale of 0-10
15	Screen for other key symptoms including red flag features
16	Explore the patient's ideas, concerns and expectations
17	Summarise the patient's presenting complaint
Systemic enquiry	
18	Screen for relevant symptoms in other body systems
Past medical and surgical history	
19	Ask if the patient has any medical conditions
20	Ask if the patient has had any relevant surgical procedures
21	Ask if the patient has any allergies and if so, clarify what kind of reaction they had to the substance
Drug history	
22	Ask if the patient is currently taking any prescribed medications or over-the-counter remedies
23	Ask about medications which are associated with medication-overuse headaches including frequency of use

Family history	
24	Ask the patient if there is any family history of headaches, cancer, bleeds on the brain, clotting disorders or bleeding disorders
Social history	
25	Explore the patient's general social context
26	Take a smoking history
27	Take an alcohol history
28	Ask about recreational drug use
29	Gather details about the patient's occupation
Closing the consultation	
30	Summarise the salient points of the history back to the patient and ask if they feel anything has been missed
31	Thank the patient for their time
32	Dispose of PPE appropriately and wash your hands
Key communication skills	
33	Active listening
34	Summarising
35	Signposting

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