

Questions

- What is the diagnosis?
- How would you investigate and manage this patient?

Case 5:

History

A 24-year-old man presents to his general practitioner (GP) with a fever. This has been present on and off for 3 days. On the first day he felt a little shaky, but by the third day he felt very unwell with the fever and had a feeling of intense cold with generalized shaking at the same time. He felt very sweaty. The whole episode lasted for 2.5 h, and he felt drained and unwell afterwards. He had lost his appetite.

There is a previous history of hepatitis 4 years earlier, and he had glandular fever at the age of 18 years. He smokes 15–20 cigarettes each day and occasionally smokes marijuana. He denies any intravenous drug abuse. He drinks around 14 units of alcohol each week. He has taken no other medication except for malaria prophylaxis. He denies any homosexual contacts. He has had a number of heterosexual contacts each year but says that all had been with protected intercourse. He had returned from Nigeria 3 weeks earlier and was finishing off his prophylactic malaria regime. He had been in Nigeria for 6 weeks as part of his job working for an oil company and had no illnesses while he was there.

Examination

He looks unwell. His pulse is 94/min; blood pressure is 118/72 mmHg. There are no heart murmurs. There are no abnormalities to find in the respiratory system. In the abdomen there is some tenderness in the left upper quadrant. There are no enlarged lymph nodes.

INVESTIGATIONS		Normal
Haemoglobin	11.1 g/dL	13.7–17.7 g/dL
Mean corpuscular volume (MCV)	97 fL	80–99 fL
White cell count	$9.4 \times 10^9/L$	$3.9–10.6 \times 10^9/L$
Neutrophils	$6.3 \times 10^9/L$	$1.8–7.7 \times 10^9/L$
Lymphocytes	$2.9 \times 10^9/L$	$1.0–4.8 \times 10^9/L$
Platelets	$112 \times 10^9/L$	$150–440 \times 10^9/L$
Sodium	134 mmol/L	135–145 mmol/L
Potassium	4.8 mmol/L	3.5–5.0 mmol/L
Urea	4.2 mmol/L	2.5–6.7 mmol/L
Creatinine	74 μ mol/L	70–120 μ mol/L
Alkaline phosphatase	76 IU/L	30–300 IU/L
Alanine aminotransferase	33 IU/L	5–35 IU/L
Gamma-glutamyl transpeptidase	42 IU/L	11–51 IU/L
Bilirubin	28 mmol/L	3–17 mmol/L
Glucose	4.5 mmol/L	4.0–6.0 mmol/L
Urine: no protein; no blood; no sugar		

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