

## Case 2:

### History

A 62-year-old woman is encouraged to consult her general practitioner because her husband thinks she has become rather confused and irritable over the last 3–4 weeks. She admits to feeling rather irritable and has found it difficult to remember lists on occasions. There is no relevant medical history.

On systems review she complains of some non-specific back pain. This has been present for 2 months and is maximal in the low thoracic area. She does not recall any trauma at the start of the problem and the pain is gradually increasing in severity. It is partially relieved by paracetamol and ibuprofen that she buys in the local pharmacy. She has noticed some abdominal discomfort and constipation which she has related to the medication for the back pain. She takes no other medicines and does not drink or smoke.

### Examination

She looks a little pale. There is no abdominal tenderness. Bowel sounds are normal. She has tenderness locally over the lower thoracic spine.

INVESTIGATIONS		Normal
Haemoglobin	9.9 g/dL	11.7–15.7 g/dL
White cell count	$3.2 \times 10^9/L$	$3.5\text{--}11.0 \times 10^9/L$
Platelets	$112 \times 10^9/L$	$150\text{--}440 \times 10^9/L$
Sodium	140 mmol/L	135–145 mmol/L
Erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR)	96 mm/hr	<10 mm/hr
Potassium	3.8 mmol/L	3.5–5.0 mmol/L
Urea	7.5 mmol/L	2.5–6.7 mmol/L
Creatinine	131 $\mu\text{mol/L}$	70–120 $\mu\text{mol/L}$
Random glucose	5.1 mmol/L	4.0–6.0 mmol/L

### Questions

- What is the most likely diagnosis?
- What other investigations would you perform?

## Case 3:

### History

A 67-year-old man is referred to a neurologist by his general practitioner (GP). His symptoms are of weakness and wasting of the muscles of his left hand. He has noticed the weakness is worse after using his hand, for example, after using a screwdriver. He has also noticed cramps in his forearm muscles. On a few occasions recently he has felt choking sensations after taking fluids. Past medical history is notable for hypertension for 15 years and a myocardial infarction 3 years previously. Medication consists of simvastatin, aspirin and atenolol. He is a retired university lecturer. He lives with his wife, and they have two grown-up children. He is a non-smoker and drinks a bottle of wine a week.