

The Medical History

Presenting Complaint

- Determine symptoms which brought patient in

History of Presenting Complaint

- **'Explode' every symptom** (including further symptoms you elicit in system reviews)
 - Time-frame
 - When started
 - Acute or gradual onset
 - Duration
 - Progression
 - Intermittent or continuous
 - Symptom-specific questions e.g. SOCRATES for pain (see OSCEstop notes on [exploding symptoms](#))
- **Relevant system reviews** to determine presence/absence of possible associated symptoms (see OSCEstop notes on [systems review](#))

Past Medical/ Surgical History

- Ask generally medical conditions and past operations
- Ask specifically about conditions/risk factors relevant to differentials (e.g. hypertension, diabetes etc for cardiac chest pain)
- Find out when diagnosed, what treatment, control of condition etc

Drug History

- **Allergies** (+ reaction)
- **Medications** (with doses and frequencies)

Family History

- Ask family history of conditions relevant to differentials

Social History

- **Living situation:** house/flat/nursing home, who's at home, carers, coping with activities of daily living, walking aids
- **Occupation**
- **Smoking and alcohol:** smoking (calculate pack years), alcohol (calculate weekly units), illicit drugs
- **Travel**

Other Points

- **Ideas, concerns and expectations** is a vital part of the history, and should be integrated throughout
 - Ask ideas and concerns about condition
 - Ask expectations from consultation
- Remember to pick up on **cues** throughout history
- Some specialties have **specific histories** with additional parts (see OSCEstop notes on [specific histories](#))