

FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

MFFLM Examination General Forensic Medicine SAQ Sample Question

John S. aged 22, has been arrested on suspicion of murder at 19.00 hours on Thursday evening. He is likely to be detained for more than 24 hours. He states he takes Methadone 70mls daily. You have been requested to examine him to ascertain his fitness for detention and interview. List six facts you would want to clarify in relation to his Methadone:

1. Duration of treatment.
2. Duration on that particular dose.
3. The time of his last dose.
4. Whether he is taking any illicit substances, particularly opiates.
5. Who prescribes it for him.
6. The method of taking it e.g. daily collection, supervised consumption etc.

You examine him at 22.30 hours and find that he is awake and alert with normal vital signs and no signs of opiate withdrawal or intoxication. Describe three key points of your management in relation to his Methadone and its half life:

1. Methadone has a long half life.
2. Methadone is not indicated at present.
3. Medical review in the morning.

At 10.00 hours on Friday morning he is seen by your colleague who confirms the dose of his medication and administers 70mls of Methadone. At 16.00 hours you are asked to see him because he is unrousable in his cell. On examination, the detainee is breathing. What five physical signs would suggest he has opiate intoxication?

1. Pin point pupils
2. Reduced GCS
3. Bradycardia
4. Hypotension
5. Reduced respiratory rate.

List six key points in your immediate management of the patient:

1. Request a 999 ambulance.
2. Check blood glucose.
3. Administer Naloxone 0.4mg sc.
4. Place in the recovery position.
5. Stay with the detainee until an ambulance arrives.
6. Transfer the patient to hospital.