Diagnosis: Panic Disorder

Criteria:
- Panic Attack
- 4 or more developed abruptly and reached a peak in 10 minutes
  - palpitations
  - sweating
  - trembling
  - shortness of breath
  - choking
  - nausea or sudden GI symptoms
  - dizziness or lightheadedness
  - derealization
  - fear of losing control
  - fear of dying
  - parathesias
  - chills or flushes

- Agoraphobia
  - Anxiety about being in situations or places from which escape might be difficult
  - situations are avoided, a companion will reduce anxiety (no so for social phobia)
  - Not part of another anxiety disorder

Epidemiology:
- 1.6-2.2% lifetime prevalence
- onset early 20’s
- 2Female:male
- 1/3 to ½ have agoraphobia
- MDD 50-60% lifetime prevalence
- If MDD then 15-30% panic disorder
- MDD precedes panic in 1/3 of cases
- MDD coincides or follows in the other 2/3 of cases

Etiology:
- Biological:
  - Highly familial
  - 8 times more likely in first degree relatives of probands
  - early onset more likely to be familial

- Psychological:
  - Intense fear reaction from real or perceived threat

Differential Diagnosis:
- Medical:
• Substance induced  
  Withdrawal (alcohol)  
  Intoxication (amphetamine, cocaine, caffeine)  
• Cardiovascular  
  SVT, HTN, MVP, MI  
• Pulmonary  
  Asthma, PE  
• Neurological  
  CVA, Seizures, MS  
• Endocrine  
  Hypoglycemia  
  Thyroid disease  
  B12  
• Other  
  Uremia  

**Psychiatric:**  
• Specific phobia  
• PTSD  
• GAD  
• OCD  
• Malingering  
• Factitious  
• Somatoform  
• Hypochondriasis  
• Depression  
• Schizophrenia  

**Work-up:**  
• Symptom directed work-up  
• Electrolytes including blood glucose  
• EKG (WPW, SVT etc.)  
• Thyroid function tests  
• Urine drug screen (consider BAL)  

**Treatment:**  
**Bio:** TCAs, SSRIs, benzodiazepines in early course  
  Treatment is generally for 12-18 months  
  8 to 12 weeks to respond  
  MAOI in resistant cases  

**Psycho:** CBT (12 weeks)  

**Social:** Psychoeducation, relaxation techniques, regulation of psychoactive substances
Prognosis:

- Generally favorable
- 30-50% asymptomatic at five years
- 30-50% symptomatic but “normal” life
- 10-20% still with severe symptoms