

CASE:

Fritz Mahler

PATIENT

Name:

Fritz Mahler

Age:

45 years old

Occupation:

Owner of a courier service

Family situation:

Two children - males 14 and 12

Past history:

NAD, stopped smoking 5 years ago

Medications:

Allergies:

Description of the Situation

Appearance: Present with a happy easy going manner. On questioning about work, however, it is obvious that this is causing him some anxiety.

You have visited the doctor infrequently for colds etc. Just recently at a check-up, the doctor commented on your blood pressure. This is the third time you have presented for a blood pressure check. On your last visit the doctor also commented that your cholesterol was high. The doctor has said you may need some tests done and start you on tablets because of your high blood pressure.

You wonder whether the blood pressure problem is related to the stress at work. Your business is having financial problems and this has added extra stress at work and at home e.g. you "yell at the kids".

In response to specific questioning, you are having some difficulty getting to sleep even though you feel exhausted. This is because you are thinking about everything that needs to be organised in the next few days. Your appetite is normal and your weight is stable. You are usually so tired at night that you are less interested in sex. Your wife has commented about this but it is not a major problem.

You are concerned about having high blood pressure but you don't want to be on tablets for the rest of your life. You drink about four glasses of beer at the pub each weeknight, and a couple of cans over the weekend. If the doctor suggested that you should stop your alcohol consumption you become defensive - it is part of your lifestyle to have a drink at the pub with "the boys".

How to play the role

An apparently happy easy going man who is actually anxious about his work. He is defensive about his alcohol consumption, but is prepared to try other ways to help his blood pressure. Depending on the doctor's approach he may be prepared to take medications or reduce his alcohol intake.

Questions patient or relative might ask

1. Does it really matter if I didn't go on anything? I don't feel sick.
2. Isn't there anything I could do to help my blood pressure (except stop drinking)?
3. How long would I need to be on tablets for?
4. What about my cholesterol reading?