Patient Stories: Student Version
Infectious Disease Diagnosis Activity

Samantha
Samantha had a great spring break vacation with her parents to the island of Trinidad. She was at the beach a few days and also explored the countryside. Samantha came home from vacation on a Sunday and was back at school on Monday. By Wednesday she was not feeling well. She had a fever and also felt weak and had the chills. The school nurse sent Samantha home to rest. When her mom came home, she saw that Samantha’s eyes were yellow and her fever was getting higher.

John
John’s parents recently went on a Caribbean cruise and visited several islands. A few days after they came home to Florida, John’s father became very ill. He had a severe headache, extreme muscle aches and swollen joints, and developed a rash around his torso. He was better after about a week. Before becoming ill, John and his father worked outdoors in the yard every day at dawn and dusk to avoid the heat. Now John is starting to feel achy and feverish.

José
José went to visit his extended family in Brazil for the summer. He reconnected with his old friends by playing soccer every day. But a few months after getting home, José noticed red spots on his skin. The spots are growing and oozing pus. Some of them have become ulcers. José and his mother are very worried!

Maggie
Maggie is a high school student who lives in Connecticut. Yesterday, Maggie was at the mall when a stranger noticed that she was disoriented. When the stranger asked whether she was okay, Maggie said that she had a severe headache and her neck was stiff. She also noticed that her lymph nodes were swollen and her body was sore all over.

Tara
Tara is a college student who spent last summer at a wilderness camp in India. The camp was 40 miles outside of the city of Mumbai. She worked with underprivileged children as a volunteer for a youth organization. She spent 30 days as a canoeing instructor. Tara really enjoyed working with the children, but near the end of her stay she began to feel sick. She remembers waking up one night with sweats and extreme nausea. That was the third week into her stay. The symptoms reminded her of the flu she had last winter, but they were stronger and lasted longer. Tara continued to feel sick the next week. Then she was vomiting and had a fever. Tasks that had been easy, such as rowing a canoe with a few children, were now difficult. She was often short of breath. When her father picked her up at the airport, he told his daughter that her skin was “yellow.” It’s October now, but Tara still has many of the same symptoms, and her complexion has not returned to its usual color.
Sebastian
Sebastian is a junior on his high school’s baseball team. When he returned home from practice on a hot August afternoon he felt exhausted and achy. He also had a headache and pressure behind his eyes. Sebastian thought his headache was probably from playing baseball in the hot sun all day. He went to his room and lay down to rest. About a half hour later, his mother called him to dinner. On his way downstairs, he stopped in the bathroom. Sebastian looked in the mirror and noticed that his face was pale and blotchy. A moment later his nose began to bleed. He wondered why he was feeling so badly. Just a week earlier, when he visited his grandparents in San Juan, Puerto Rico, he was soaking up the sun and feeling great.

Kelly
Kelly is a freshman in high school. She enjoys hiking with her dog at their favorite park in New York’s Hudson Valley. This spring the weather has been beautiful, so she has been hiking more often than usual. Kelly was in her first period Spanish class yesterday when she realized that her ankle joints and leg muscles were aching. She thought her aches and pains must be from all the hiking she has been doing. When she came home after school, she was tired and decided to get into some comfortable clothes and rest. That’s when she noticed a strange round rash about the size of a grapefruit on her stomach.