

**QUESTION**  
 A 65-year-old male patient with a long history of hypertension and hyperlipidemia presents to the clinic with a 2-week history of increasing fatigue, weight loss, and intermittent fevers. He reports that he has been unable to complete his usual activities of daily living. He has no cough, hemoptysis, or chest pain. He has no recent travel, sick contacts, or exposure to animals. He is on lisinopril, atorvastatin, and aspirin. His last laboratory work was within normal limits.

**ANSWER**  
 The patient's symptoms are concerning for a systemic infectious process. The absence of respiratory symptoms and recent travel makes a primary pulmonary infection less likely. The chronicity and systemic nature of the symptoms suggest a diagnosis of tuberculosis. The patient's risk factors, including age and immunosuppression from chronic hypertension and hyperlipidemia, increase his susceptibility.

**DISCUSSION**  
 Tuberculosis (Tb) is a common cause of chronic infectious disease. It is caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex. The disease typically presents with insidious onset of symptoms, including cough, weight loss, and fevers. However, extrapulmonary manifestations are common, especially in older patients and those with immunosuppression. The patient's symptoms of fatigue, weight loss, and fevers are classic for Tb. The absence of cough and chest pain does not rule out Tb, as these symptoms may be absent in extrapulmonary disease.

## Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis is a chronic infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex. It is a leading cause of death and disability worldwide. The disease is characterized by insidious onset of symptoms, including cough, weight loss, and fevers. The patient's symptoms of fatigue, weight loss, and fevers are classic for Tb. The absence of cough and chest pain does not rule out Tb, as these symptoms may be absent in extrapulmonary disease.

**KEY POINTS**  
 • Tuberculosis is a chronic infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex.  
 • The disease is characterized by insidious onset of symptoms, including cough, weight loss, and fevers.  
 • The patient's symptoms of fatigue, weight loss, and fevers are classic for Tb.  
 • The absence of cough and chest pain does not rule out Tb, as these symptoms may be absent in extrapulmonary disease.