

## Boy with crackling neck

### Question

An 8-year-old boy was referred to the emergency department for a 24-h history of retrosternal and neck pain. His previous history was unremarkable. Parents reported a history of fever and cough since 3 days, while the pain acutely started when he was laughing. At the clinical evaluation, the boy was in good general condition, breathing normally and complaining only mild lateral cervical neck pain. Subcutaneous emphysema was notable in the right lateral cervical region, with crackling-feel to the touch. Furthermore, a crunching, rasping sound, synchronous with the heartbeat was heard over the precordium (Hamman's sign). A chest X-ray was performed (Fig. 1).

Basing on the case presentation and on what you see in Figure 1, what is your diagnosis and how would you manage this patient? (Answer on page 165)

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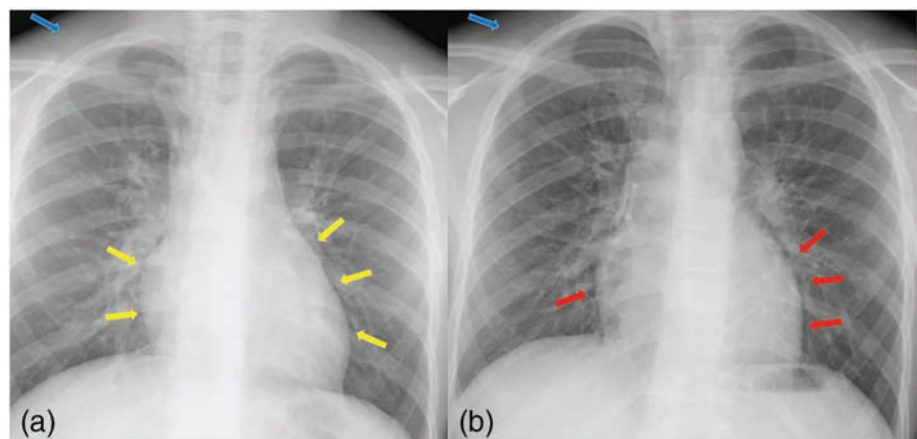
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**Fig. 1** Haystack sign (the patient's heart is surrounded above and below with gas, with the appearance of a haystack from Monet's paintings), more evident in inspiration (b) red arrows than in expiration (a) yellow arrows, suggestive of pneumomediastinum. Blue arrows show subcutaneous emphysema.

## Stevens–Johnson/Toxic epidermal necrolysis overlap syndrome

### Question

A 2-year-old girl presented to the emergency department with desquamative cutaneous lesions and mucosal ulceration, asthenia and feeding difficulties for the last 7 days. Two weeks before she

was medicated with co-trimoxazole for an upper respiratory airway infection. She had personal history of non-severe malaria. On physical examination there were extensive desquamative areas predominating on her face, upper and lower limbs (Fig. 1)